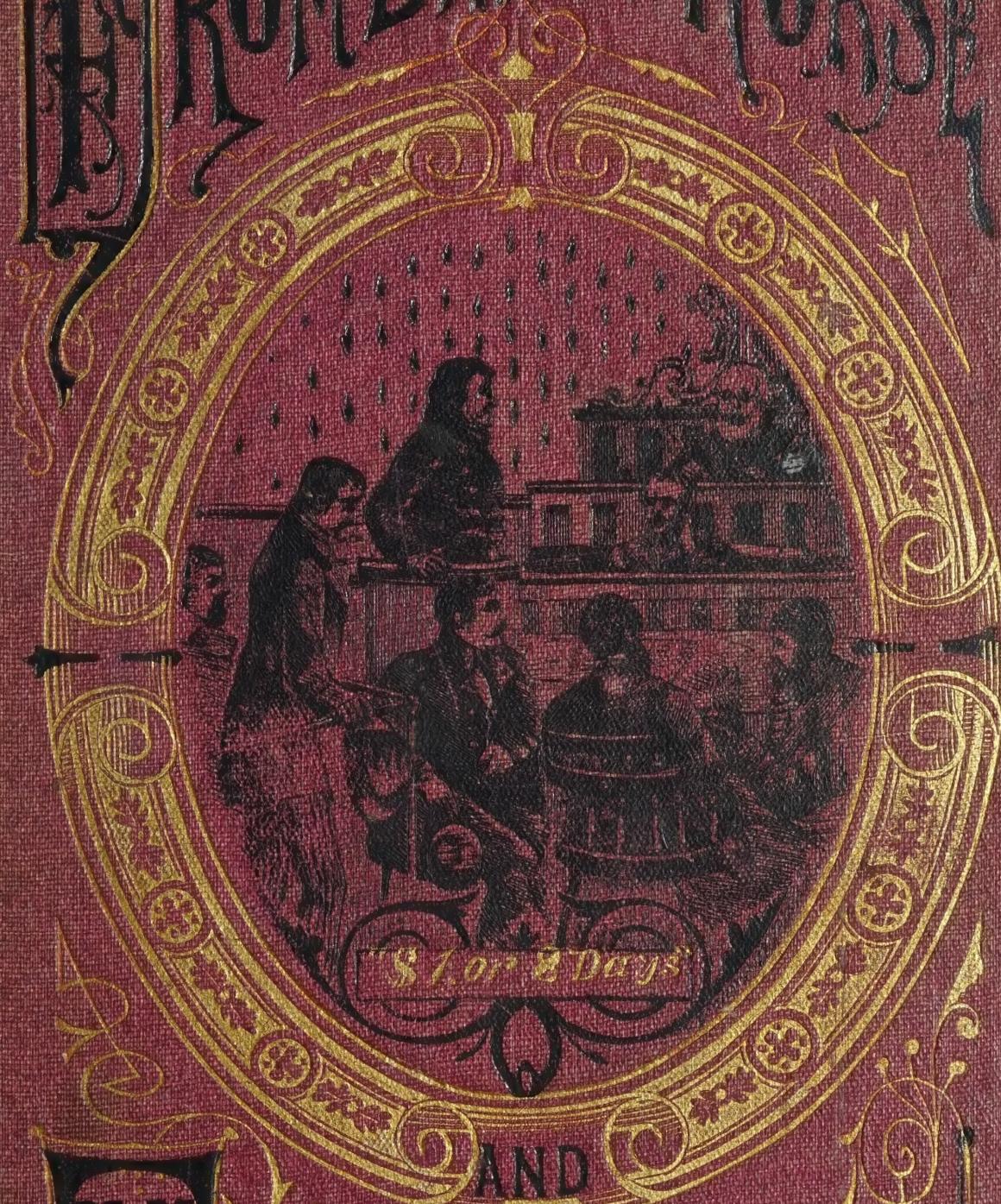


# FROM BAD TO WORSE



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J.A. Phillips

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# HARD TO BEAT.

A DRAMATIC TALE IN A PROLOGUE AND FIVE ACTS.

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## PREFACE.

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WHEN these stories were written, more than four years ago, they were somewhat hastily prepared for weekly publication, and some things crept into them which calmer consideration has shown me it would have been wiser to omit. In preparing the stories therefore, for publication for the first time in book form, I have carefully re-written them, making some alterations which I hope may prove improvements, without changing the plots or materially altering the language. I would fain repeat the experiment I tried three years ago when I published "Thompson's Turkey," of asking my readers to send me candid criticisms of the book, but its want of success then somewhat deters me. Out of some five hundred and odd persons who purchased the book *not one* complied with my request to criticise it; and the only criticism from my readers which I received was one from a lady to whom I had presented a copy. However, I am naturally hopeful, and will trust in having a better return this time, and, therefore, request every reader to send me his or her candid opinion of these stories (either signed or not, as the writer pleases) to my Post Office address, Box 1,413, Montreal. It will not cost much time or money, and will be a great source of gratification to me. I not only want people to buy and read my book, but I would very much like to know what they think of it.

JOHN A. PHILLIPS.

MONTREAL, April, 1877.



# HARD TO BEAT.

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## PROLOGUE: **YOUTHFUL LOVES.**

---

### SCENE I.

IN THE JAWS OF DEATH.

MAY the nineteenth, eighteen hundred and fifty-four; time, six o'clock in the evening; place, St. Leonard's churchyard, in the Island of Barbadoes, West Indies.

The fierce tropical sun had sunk to rest, and the brief half hour of fitful light which comprises West Indian twilight was drawing to a close. The day had been intensely warm; the sun had shone with that fierce withering heat known only in the tropics, and under which nature seems sometimes to collapse, and all life and vigor to be scorched out of every animate and inanimate thing. At last he declined in the west, sinking down in a blaze of blood-red glory, and throwing his rays far into the heavens in a magnificent burst of departing splendor. No evening breeze sprung up after his setting, as is usual on the small sea-girt islands of the West Indies; the very wind seemed too prostrated by the heat to blow, and, after a short ineffectual effort, the breeze sighed itself wearily away, and nature seemed to hold its breath preparatory to a grand outburst of fury. The air was terribly close and oppressive; a leaden weight seemed to press it down, the frequent flashes of sheet lightning showed the atmosphere heavily charged with electricity; and the quickly gathering clouds told of a fast approaching storm.

The chapel of Saint Leonard's is probably the most peculiar in the West Indies, where buildings are usually low, broad, and flat-roofed; and it would seem strangely familiar to a Canadian. It is long, narrow, high, and has a singularly steep roof, framed expressly to throw off the snow—an unknown luxury in the

region where the little chapel stands. It was in fact built after the model of a church near Quebec of which a nephew of the Bishop of Barbadoes was pastor at the time St. Leonard's was built; he had sent a photograph of his church to his uncle, and the old man, thinking that as good a model for a church as he needed, had the chapel built after the pattern of the Canadian church. At the eastern end rises a tall, thin spire with loop-holes for three bells; but there is only one bell, and that is not sweet-toned; it had been tolling mournfully nearly all day on this nineteenth of May, and the old bandy-legged negro who filled the post of bell-ringer had gone to sleep with his foot in the bell-rope and continued to toll dismally in his slumber.

The churchyard at Saint Leonard's is a pretty one; even then, eighteen years ago, before the dwarf olives and willows were fully grown, it had a beautiful appearance. The chapel stands about one hundred and fifty yards from the road, and is on top of a little hill rising in a gentle slope from the road to an elevation of about fifty feet. A broad circular drive sweeps up to within ten yards of the porch, and is fringed on both sides with dwarf olive trees, while peeping out through the leaves are seen numerous white marble tombstones, neat iron railings, modest wooden headboards, and, here and there, a bed of roses or other flowers, tended by some loving hand which endeavored to keep beautiful the spot where some friend or relative reposed. The cemetery is about half a mile from Bridgetown, far enough to be removed from its noise and bustle; and a holy, peaceful quiet usually pervaded the precincts of the dead, broken only by the merry twitter of the birds as they winged their way to their evening rest, or the shouts of laughter from an adjoining field where some children were wont to play.

On this particular evening, however, the churchyard bore little of its usual aspect; the plot of ground within the circular drive was the scene of a weird and terrible animation, such as had never before been witnessed on the island, and such as, I trust, may never be seen there again. The scourge of cholera had been sweeping over Bridgetown and its suburbs for the past week, and hundreds were daily falling victims to its violence. Standing at the chapel door—amid a garden of tube-roses, tiger lilies, geraniums and other flowers and shrubs which grew in profusion in a neat little enclosure extending around the chapel—one could

witness a strange and fantastic scene, more like some picture of pandemonium than a leaf from real life in the nineteenth century.

It was dusk ; the few lingering rays of the setting sun were just vivid enough to save the scene from total darkness, yet left it in an uncertain, glimmering light, and the quickly gathering masses of black, rain-laden clouds threw a deep shadow over the earth, and shut out the light of the stars. On the extreme right of the plot of ground within the circular drive was a huge pit, seemingly thirty or forty feet square ; near it were several blazing tar barrels throwing a lurid light into the closing night ; out in the centre of the plot were other pits, and scattered around were some dozen or more tar barrels all ablaze.

In these pits, near these pits, and piled on suspicious-looking mounds of earth in the vicinity of the tar barrels, were numerous heaps of lime which shone with a ghastly whiteness under the flickering light of the blazing tar. Further away on the right—where the first victims had been buried—were large numbers of newly-made graves, covered with lime, through which a sickly phosphorescent light made its way, and gave forth a pale bluish flame, such as is popularly connected with ghosts. In the circular drive were numerous hearses, carts, carriages, waggons, all filled with dead bodies ; one vehicle frequently containing several, and the hearses having corpses strapped on their tops as well as three or four inside. Some of these corpses were in coffins, some wrapped in tar sheets, some clothed in the garments they had died in ; and some with scarcely any covering to hide their nakedness. Under the terrible fear of infection, mothers forsook their children, husbands deserted their wives ; nearly all who could fled from the plague-stricken victims, and they were left to die alone. As they died, so were they buried, no time to make coffins, no one to make them ; no time for mourning friends, no one to mourn for them ; no time for anything, but to hurry them to the pits and hastily cover them with their mother earth. So quickly was this done in some cases that frequently cholera victims were buried within two hours after the breath had left their bodies. The manner of interment was simple. Moving about incessantly in the terrible gloom of the graveyard were fantastic looking figures, appearing in the ghastly light like demons gloating over the wreck of human life. They were the grave-diggers, swarthy negroes with coarse brutish faces, and callous hearts who filled their solemn and fearful vocation with hardened recklessness ; laughing, joking, singing,

they threw the corpses into the yawning pits as carelessly as they would have thrown sacks of oats. Most of them were stripped to the waist; their black, oily skins, glowing with perspiration, glittered in the strong glare of the tar barrels, and shimmered like the slippery skin of an eel. With steady, constant labor they seized each corpse or coffin by the head and feet—one grave-digger at each end—and with a “one, two, three,” sent it rolling into the pit, then a bucketful of lime was cast in and the burial was complete, all but filling in the earth when the pit was full.

No! Not quite complete; the faithful minister of God stood firm to his post, unterrified by the awful plague, unmindful of the terrible blow which the dread disease had struck at himself, taking from him the wife who had cheered, helped and comforted him for a quarter of a century; heedless of the rising tempest, and fearless of the dreadful contagion everywhere around him, the noble old man stood amid the heaps of dead, and poured forth in fervent tones the solemn words of the burial service over each pitful of victims. His ample surplice fell in snowy folds around him, his thin white hair floated gently in the breeze, and as he raised his eyes to Heaven uttering the solemn words, “In sure and certain faith of the resurrection of the dead,” he looked almost angelic; and his tall commanding figure stood forth in bold relief, the one bright spot in the dark gloomy scene, telling of peace beyond the sky, and of a glorious hereafter for those whom the sudden coming of a swift and terrible death had found prepared to meet their Maker.

Near the pit on the left which the negroes were filling, was a heap of four coffins, just deposited from one hearse, and all brought from one house; two of them evidently contained adults, and the others children, one coffin being very small as if containing a child of three or four years. The negroes had thrown several bodies into the pit, and approaching the heap of coffins seized the largest of the two containing children, and threw it into the dark yawning gulf. The weight being light the coffin was thrown forward with considerable force, and, striking against another already in the pit, it was broken and the body of a boy, apparently twelve or fourteen years old, swathed in the garments of the grave, rolled out, and lay amongst the coffinless corpses in the pit.

The rude shock seemed to have brought back the fleeting spirit to resent the outrage offered the inanimate clay; a faint sigh escaped the pale, firmly-closed lips; the head moved feebly on one

side ; the tightly-clenched teeth and strongly-clasped hands, with the finger nails buried deep in the palms, telling of cramps, slightly relaxed ; the drawn and distorted limbs made an effort to straighten themselves, and animation seemed to be again returning to what was considered a corpse. In a few seconds the eyelids slightly parted, and the boy looked about him in a dreamy, half unconscious sort of way, as if only partly realizing his position. At last he seemed to become aware of his perilous situation, and, unable to move or speak, a deep, bitter groan escaped him, as his whole mind cried out against the terrible fate of being buried alive.

“ Oh, golly ! What’s dat ? ” exclaimed one of the grave-diggers, staring in affright into the pit from whence the sound proceeded. “ Look a-here Jim,” he continued to another grave-digger, who was near him, “ dar’s sumting berry curious agwine on har. I s’pecs it’s a ghost.”

“ You’s a fool, Mingo,” replied the polite Jim, “ ghosts is got sumting better to do than go fooling about churchyards. Gi’ me a han’ wid this un, an’ we’ll soon settle the ghost.”

“ O-h-h h ! ” came in a long, deep groan from the pit, and both negroes started back in terror.

“ Dar, I tole ye so,” exclaimed Mingo. “ It’s de debbil sure— Oh, golly ! I seen ‘im wag he tail.”

“ Taint no debbil,” responded the matter-of-fact Jim, “ debbil too busy now to go lying down in holes to get cubber up. It’s one of dem corpses cum to life again. Fling in sum mo’ dirt afore he kin get out. We aint got no time to fool away wid dead fokes dat want to cum to life again. He orter fine out he wasn’t dead afore he cum here. Too late now to bodder wid him.”

“ But say, Jim ; ef he aint dead we aint got no bissness to bury him. We’s paid to bury dead fokes, not live ‘uns.”

“ Taint no different, Mingo ; de man orter be ded ; an’ ef he aint, he sune will be when you cubber ‘em up ; so shubbel in the dirt.”

“ Blest ef I does,” responded Mingo, “ ye can cubber ‘em up yourself ; I aint agwine to bury no live people.”

“ Ell sune enuf be dead,” said the imperturbable Jim, taking up a spadeful of earth and throwing it over the body.

The slight shock of the earth striking him, seemed to infuse desperate strength into the weak frame of the boy, and half raising himself on one elbow, he cried in a faint voice,—

“ Help ! ”

"Blowed ef I'se agwine to see a live man buried dead," said Mingo springing into the pit.

"Here, Jim," he shouted a moment later, "God a-mercy, ef 'taint Massa Harry. Here ye onhuman ole nigger len' me a han' an' get 'em out of de hole."

Jim finding the boy was really alive assisted Mingo in lifting him out of the pit, and laying him by its side. The sensation of relief at his rescue from a terrible death, and the immense revulsion of feeling proved too much for the feeble strength of the almost dying boy, and he relapsed into a state of unconsciousness, from which he was slowly roused by the constant and tender attention of Mingo.

Meanwhile the clergyman had approached the group, and as he came near started with surprise and exclaimed, "Merciful Powers! What is this? Some unfortunate being almost buried alive?"

"Golly, massa, he had a mity tite squeeze for it. Two minnits mo' an' he was a dead boy fursure," said Mingo; "but I tinks he's all rite now. I'se agwine to tak 'em home rite away."

"Who is he," asked the clergyman, "who has thus been saved from being hurried into his Maker's presence before his time?"

"Massa Harry Griffith."

"Harry Griffith! Poor fellow; the life you have saved Mingo will be blank enough, for he has not a relation left in the world."

"Is de ole man dead, sah?" asked Mingo, with a touch of regret and respect in his voice.

"Yes; he died this morning shortly after his wife; and it was thought both children had followed their parents. The cholera took every soul out of that house, except, it appears, the one which has been so mercifully restored to life. Poor fellow, poor fellow," he continued, looking sadly at the boy. "I know not where to send him. My own home is the abode of sickness and death, and I almost fear to ask anyone to receive him, although there is little fear of contagion now."

"An' so de ole man's gone," said Mingo half soliloquizing, "I knowed de ole man ebber since he war knee high to a grasshopper, an' now he gone dead. Wall, wall, I 'specs we's all agwine dat road purty sune. I tinks, Massa Parson," he continued, "I better tak 'em to Miss Morton; I 'specs she don't care nuffin 'bout col-lerer, an' de ole man an' she was grate frens,"

" You are right, Mingo, the very person. Mrs. Morton is a good, worthy soul, and has been of immense service to the poor and suffering in this trying time. Take him there."

A stretcher was soon procured, the boy placed on it, and Mingo and one of his fellow-laborers bore it to Mrs. Morton's house which was quite close to the graveyard.

---

## SCENE II.

### IN THE ARMS OF LOVE.

MRS. MORTON was a widow with two children, the eldest, Charlie, was about seventeen, and his sister, Mary—or as she was generally called, Mamie—was two years younger. Mrs. Morton's husband had been dead several years, but she remained a widow, preferring to devote her life to training her children to accepting any of the offers she had to change her condition. Her husband had left her moderately, but not bountifully provided for; and although the neat little cottage on Eagle Hall road belonged to her, she frequently found it difficult to make both ends meet, until Charlie reached the age of fourteen, when he left school and went to business with an old friend of his father's, who was a commission merchant, and the small salary allowed him helped to meet the family expenses. Charlie—no one ever called him anything else—had not been what is called "a smart boy" at school; quiet, patient, persevering, he had won his way to a good position in his class by dint of hard application; not a high place, scarcely high enough to be above mediocrity, but better than was expected of him. Diffident and shy, retiring in manner, rather awkward, and not at all self-asserting, he had attained the *soubriquet* of "Stupid;" not a very enviable appellation, and one which he really did not deserve; for under that sluggish exterior there was more strength of purpose, more determination and more energy than he was given credit for. When he left school he selected to go into business in preference to studying for a profession; influenced mainly by a desire to afford some assistance to his mother and sister as speedily as possible, and in this he had been partially successful, thanks to his close application more than to his aptness for commercial pursuits.

He would have preferred to have been a lawyer; he had an idea that he was intended by nature for that *rara avis*, an honest lawyer; but he knew his mother could ill afford the expense of a college education for him, and he also felt that it might be many long years before he could expect to attain affluence, or even a bare competency by the practice of law, even if he were successful, which was doubtful; therefore, he gave up his own wishes and turned his attention to pursuits which promised more immediate remuneration.

Charlie had one idol; he loved his mother with tender filial affection; but he fairly idolized his sister, Mamie. All his hopes, all his plans, all his thoughts and cares for the future were based on her happiness, and all his finely-built castles in the air had her for their presiding deity. No dream of success or hope of greatness was complete without her to share it; it was for her he had given up his own wish to become a lawyer, and adopted commerce, as it promised a shorter and more direct road to wealth; for her sake he labored hard at mastering the uncongenial mysteries of exchange and foreign values; for her sake he sat late into the night studying the history of the commerce of various nations, reading of great discoveries and inventions of the day, and striving hard to solve that unsolvable problem, the short and easy road to wealth. Many times he thought he had found a certain path, but abandoned the idea when he found it would take years to accomplish.

Years, years; ah! how long they seem to youth with all its bounding ambition; and how terribly short and startlingly fleeting they appear to our more mature conceptions. Ten years seems a lifetime to a boy of fifteen, and he would with difficulty be persuaded to enter on any enterprise which would need that period to accomplish; but ten years to a man appears a short time to wait, if the end to be gained is sure; and how many men of sixty, seventy and even eighty years of age do we see entering on speculations from which they can expect no return for ten or fifteen years, and doing so with little or no heed to the time necessary to wait for a fulfilment of their hopes, and unmindful of the fact that they will not, in all probability, live to see their hopes realized.

Mary Morton was in some respects a peculiar girl; peculiar in appearance, for she had that rare combination, raven black hair, bright, sparkling light blue eyes, and a clear, creamy complexion with ruddy cheeks. Young as she was, she gave promise of great

beauty, and, like all pretty girls, she was conscious of it, and somewhat disposed to be a little proud—a trait in her character which was not lessened by Charlie's almost slavish adoration. In temper she was quite the reverse of her brother, quick, where he was slow; seizing on knowledge with avidity, where he could only acquire by steady application; self-asserting, where he was diffident; bold, where he was timid; it was often told in jest by their mother that it was a pity their sexes had not been changed, and Mamie born a boy. Charlie's love to her was amply repaid; no one was to her like him. From the early death of her father, Charlie had to some extent taken his place, and she looked up to him for guidance and counsel, more than sisters usually do to an elder brother. She understood him better too than any one else, and could see what others failed to discern, that, under his shy, modest exterior, there was a strength of character, and a depth of purpose which none expected to find there, and which would one day bear their fruits in his future life. It was a happy household, and, as yet, no thought of care or sorrow seemed to cast its dark shadow over it.

The lamps were not lit in the modest little parlor on this evening of the nineteenth of May; and Charlie was lying on a sofa by the open window, gazing idly out into the closing night and building magnificent castles in the air, while the queen who was to inhabit them sat at the piano in the darkened room, her fingers straying carelessly over the keys, and occasionally picking out the notes of some plaintive air. It was a favorite fashion with them of spending the twilight hour, and, to Charlie at least, it was the most enjoyable period of the day; to lie there gazing out into the night, planning future greatness for his darling, and to have her playing gentle, touching airs, was the perfection of bliss to him. Presently the music ceased, and Mamie looking up and noticing Charlie's absent manner, knew well he was indulging in a day dream, and said gaily:

“A penny for your thoughts, boy.” “Boy” was a pet name with her for her brother, and, indeed, she rarely called him anything else; he rather liked it, too; if any body else called him a boy he resented it, and intimated that he was a “young man,” but, somehow, from Mamie it appeared to have an ancient sound, and to be in some inexplicable manner a sort of deferential acknowledgment of his two years’ seniority. The sound of her

voice broke the spell of his dream, and he turned on the sofa so as to face her as he said :

“ They are worth more than a penny, child, although they were very sad.” “ Child ” was his pet name for her, and she rather liked it.

“ Tell me what they are, boy, won’t you ? ” she said, crossing to the sofa and sitting by him ; “ tell its big sister who has been bothering the poor little boy to-day.”

“ Nobody has been ‘ bothering the poor little boy,’ ” he said smiling, and smoothing affectionately the long black hair which fell unconfined over her shoulders ; “ I was not thinking of myself, I was thinking of the poor Griffiths ; so sudden and so terrible. The cholera seems to be spreading more and more, and I was thinking whether we could not afford for you and mother to go to Saint Vincent until it is over ; the steamer leaves the day after to-morrow, and I think we might manage it.”

“ And leave you behind to die ? Don’t get such a stupid notion in your head, boy, for, if we go, you go with us. But I don’t think mamma will consent ; she says if God wills that we should die of cholera, we will die, no matter where we go ; and if He does not, there is no danger for us anywhere ; and I believe so too, Charlie, and I don’t like the idea of running away. Tell me about the Griffiths ; Mamma went there as soon as she heard Mrs. Griffith was dead, but she has been out all day and has not come back yet.”

“ It was very sudden, and very sad : Mrs. Griffith was taken ill early this morning, and died about ten o’clock ; her husband never left her until he was seized with the cholera himself, and he died within an hour after she did.”

“ Oh ! I’m so sorry. Poor Harry ! Poor Harry ! What a dreadful blow for him.”

“ Harry, Harry ? ” said Charlie, with a puzzled, troubled air. “ Why, don’t you know ? He left the house when he heard his mother had the cholera, and refused to go back. Poor fellow, he was taken back dying two hours after, and was laid in the grave with his parents and his sister, this evening. It almost looked like a judgment on him for his conduct to his mother.”

“ Oh, Charlie, Charlie, it can’t be true ! ” she exclaimed, passionately, throwing herself on her knees by his side, and hiding her face in her hands, while she sobbed as if her heart would break.

Charlie let her cry for some little time, smoothing her hair meanwhile, and caressing her in his fond affectionate way. Harry

Griffith had grown up almost as a brother with them, and his own heart felt heavy enough at his sudden death: it was only natural that Mamie should express great sorrow for the loss of her playmate. He waited for some time for her grief to spend itself, and then said gently:

“ Come, come, Mamie, it’s no use crying. Poor fellow, I feel his loss heavily enough myself, but tears won’t bring him back; and, after all, perhaps it is just as well; you know his father was utterly ruined by Danver’s running away, and I fear poor Harry would not have made a good man, if he had been obliged to fight his way against the world.”

She drew back a little, and flashed up at him instantly, with more anger in her tones than it was usual to find there:

“ He was the noblest, best-hearted boy I ever knew; and you ought to be ashamed of yourself to speak of him so, Charlie, now he is dead. Dead! dead! Oh, I can’t believe it!” and she threw herself again on her brother’s shoulder, and burst into another paroxysm of tears,

Charlie said nothing; but, as he looked down at her, his face grew strangely stern, and a hard, cold look stole over it, which was rarely seen on that usually calm and open countenance. By degrees her sobs ceased, and she laid still for a few seconds, then she raised her head, and putting her arms around Charlie’s neck said, in a singularly calm and deliberate tone:

“ You need never be afraid of my leaving you now; I shall stay with you always, for I shall never get married now.”

“ I hope not. I want you to be with me always; but, I suppose it is only natural you should marry some time.”

“ Not now. There was only one being for whose sake I could ever have left mamma and you, and he is dead. You may smile, Charlie, and think this is only a girl’s fancy, but it is true; I feel that I shall never love any man now, but you, and none enough to marry him.”

“ And you would have married Harry?”

“ Yes, that I would, when we were old enough.”

“ Then I am glad he is dead! Yes,” he continued savagely starting up, and pushing her slightly back from him by the movement, “ I’m glad he’s dead, and I’d rather see you dead too, than to think you should live to be the wife of a cold-blooded, hard-hearted thing like that, who deserted his mother when she was

dying, out of fear for his own safety, and who was selfish and heartless to the core."

All the latent strength of the young man's character blazed up, and all the bitterness of a naturally sweet nature was found out in these few words. No one knew so well as Mamie the force of the passions which burnt under her brother's usually placid stolidity, and she stood for a moment, half frightened, looking at him in amazement. While they were still looking into each other's eyes, hurried steps were heard on the gravel outside the window, and a man's voice cried out:

"Massa Charles, Massa Charles! op'n de do' quick fur God-a-mity sake."

Brother and sister hurried to the door, and both started at sight of the burthen the men bore.

"It's Massa Harry," said Mingo, "he ain't ded."

"Not dead! Thank Heaven for that," exclaimed Mamie, bending over the limp figure of the one snatched from the grave, and imprinting a kiss on his cold, clammy forehead.

The boy opened his eyes for a moment, and gazed into the bright blue orbs shining down on him, brimful of love and tenderness; and then the shadow of a smile flitted across his lips and he whispered:

"Not quite, Mamie; death almost had me, and I scarcely cared whether he did or not, but I will try to live now, for your sake."

"Live Harry, live for me." She threw her arms around him, and pressed him to her heart, while, with the help of the negroes, he was taken into the house.

Charlie Morton stood a little apart, watching the scene, with a dark frown on his brow, but he neither spoke, nor offered to interfere.

---

### SCENE III.

#### IN THE WASTE OF WATERS.

UNDER Mrs. Morton's experienced care, and Mamie's gentle nursing, Harry Griffith soon recovered health and strength; indeed it is one of the peculiarities of cholera that recovery is almost as rapid in proportion as the disease, and if death does not come quickly it does not come at all, and recovery is neither long nor doubtful. In a few days he was able to walk about the house,

and would even try short strolls in the garden, supported by Mamie's loving arm. She had watched over him with tender solicitude the first night and day of his rescue from the grave, when he seemed to be sinking under the reaction on the nervous system consequent on the immense shock he had received ; and even now when there seemed no danger of a relapse, she still kept a watchful eye on his every movement, as if fearing without her care some evil might happen to him. Charlie seemed to have lapsed into his normal condition of easy-going quietness, and altho' he sometimes showed signs of jealousy at Mamie's attention to Harry, he kept a good control over himself, and there was no further outbreak between brother and sister. Mamie could not fail to notice, however, that a feeling of strangeness was growing up between them, which had never been known before, and it grieved her deeply to think that the playmate of their childhood should be the one to cause the only estrangement she had ever had with her brother. She loved Charlie as truly and deeply as ever ; but a love of a different nature seemed to have suddenly been called to life within her, and almost frightened her at its strength and intensity. She had always loved Harry Griffith, with a girlish love for the companion she had known almost all her life ; but since his recovery from the grave her love had turned to the love of a woman, and she felt that she could give up brother, home, friends, everything for his sake. She did not anticipate having to do this, however ; she knew her brother too well to think he would long resist her pleadings where he knew her happiness to be at stake ; yet his terrible earnestness on the night Harry was brought to the house, his fierce angry manner, and his quiet, almost sullen, behavior since, made her anxious and uneasy, and she watched over Harry as if she thought it was not safe to leave him alone with her brother.

A month passed, not altogether happily, for the joy of Harry's constant presence was marred by the thought that she would soon be parted from him, and that she would not see him again for years, perhaps never again in this world. The late Mr. Griffith's affairs had been settled sufficiently to show that Harry was quite destitute ; after the debts against the estate were paid, there would scarcely be enough left to pay Harry's expenses to Toronto where he had an uncle, who had, some time before his father's death, offered to take him. It was not a brilliant prospect for him, poor lad, but it was the only one, and he built airy castles of his rapid

success in that El Dorado of his imagination, Canada, where it seemed to him hard work was the only requisite to acquire a rapid fortune.

Charlie seemed to thaw a little after it was known that Harry was to go away, and his manner towards him was kinder and more like his school days than it had been of late. He talked more in his old style to Mamie too, but the feeling of dislike to any thought of love between his sister and Harry had not died away, and he took an opportunity of speaking to Mamie about it.

"Child," he said, one evening, about a week before Harry was to sail, "come and sit by me, I want to talk to you seriously."

She nestled close to his side, and he took her hand in his and caressed it softly while he spoke.

"Mamie, I don't believe I ever said a harsh or unkind word to you in my life, until the other night; and I wouldn't then, only I was angry, and scarcely knew what I was saying. I am sorry for it now; try to forget that I was ever unkind to you. You know you are all the world to me, and it has made me sorry ever since to think that you and I should come so near a quarrel;" he paused for a moment, then lifted her face and gently kissed her.

"Don't mind it, boy," she answered, throwing one arm round his neck, "I knew you didn't mean it; I'll forget all about it."

"But I did mean some of it, Mamie, and I don't wish you to forget *all* about it; only forget that I spoke crossly to you."

The arm was withdrawn from his neck, but the hand was left in his, and he continued to pet and caress it.

"And about Harry?" she asked presently.

"I meant what I said about him," he answered very seriously; "it appears foolish," he continued, speaking more playfully, "for you and I to talk about this matter, as if you and Harry were grown up, instead of being scarcely more than children; but, you know, Mamie, how much I love you, and I can't help being anxious to prevent you forming any attachment now which may bring pain to you in after life. So don't be angry with me, child, but try to think that what I say to you is for your good. Harry Griffith will make a bad man, and I don't want your future linked with his in any way."

"But I love him, Charlie."

"That is only boy and girl love, child, and you will soon get over it if you try."

"I don't think so, Charlie; it seems to me that my life is bound

beyond all power of severance to Harry's, and, as we grow older, we shall only be linked closer and closer together. "No," she continued after a pause, looking steadily before her into vacancy, and speaking half to herself in a dreamy kind of way, "I know I can never forget him, and I don't think it possible that I can ever cease to love him; even if he was to die I should still love his memory."

"Well, I'm glad he's going away," said Charlie presently, "and I hope he will never come back."

"Yes, he will, he'll come back for me, by and by, when he has made a fortune. Charlie," she said, suddenly, looking up at her brother, "what has made you take such a dislike to Harry so suddenly; you were school-fellows, and always great friends, almost brothers, why do you change your mind all of a sudden and think him everything that is bad?"

"I don't know exactly what it is," he answered slowly, "I was always friendly with Harry, but we never had much in common; he is selfish, bad-tempered and cruel, and I never knew how heartless he was until he deserted his mother when she was dying of cholera, and had no one near her to cheer her last moments. A boy who would do that can never make a good man, and I should be sorry that my little sister should have anything to do with him."

"But, Charlie, suppose he makes a good man? I know he is good now, although he ought not to have deserted his mother; suppose he turns out a good, good man, what then?"

"Then I shall be very glad of it," he said kissing her forehead tenderly, "but we had better wait until then; it is a bad plan to count your chickens before they are hatched."

"But you wouldn't object then, Charlie?" she persisted nestling up to him, "if he was a good, good man, you wouldn't mind my marrying him, some day when we are all ever so much older?"

"I will wait until that day, child, before I give my consent; but, somehow, I hope I will never be asked to do that, for unless Harry is made of very different stuff from what I think he is, I should never give it."

"I should be so sorry for that," she said softly, "it would be so hard to have to choose between you."

"I hope you will never have to do that; but if you did which would you choose?"

"I don't know exactly now ; but I think—I think it would be Harry."

\* \* \* \* \*

Ten days after Harry Griffith sailed for New York in the good ship *Gazelle*, laden with sugar and molasses ; the Captain, who did not usually take passengers, taking Harry as a favor, as he had been well acquainted with his father.

"You'll have to rough it a bit, my boy," he said, "but it will do you good ; lots of fresh sea air, and plenty of salt junk and hard tack, will put any quantity of flesh on your bones ; and I will land you in New York as fat as a pig."

Harry did not show much regret at leaving the island, except at parting with Mamie. He was of a proud, ambitious nature, and had already learned to value success above all things. His father had been an easy-tempered, good-natured man who had all his life been the victim of every one who had professed friendship for him, for the sake of getting assistance from him. The very essence of truth and honesty himself, he believed all men to be the same; indeed, his favorite maxim was, "Believe every man honest until you find him a rogue," and acting on this maxim he had found more rogues in the world than in his simplicity he thought it contained. He was fond of saying, what many other people say and think, that there are not nearly so many rascals in the world as the croakers would have us believe, and that there were no such villains in real life as authors told us of in books. He had undoubting faith in the world's honesty ; and as disaster after disaster befell him, caused by his implicit confidence in so-called friends who were untrustworthy, he became disheartened, despondent, and at last, when an old school-fellow and bosom friend ran away, leaving him responsible for debts which would swallow up nearly all the remnant of his once large fortune, he appeared fairly broken-hearted, and said the world was a great deal worse than he had ever thought it was, and he did not care how soon he left it. He soon left : the cholera came and ended all his troubles.

A greater contrast to the father than the son could scarcely have been found. Suspicious, crafty, jealous of the success of others, selfish and ambitious, careless of what means he used to gain his purpose, Harry Griffith before he had reached the age of fifteen had gained for himself the reputation of having "an old head upon

young shoulders ;" and the wiseacres used to prophesy : " He'll never make a fool of himself, like his father." Perhaps not, he had great capacity for good or evil, but it needed a strong will to keep him in the right course, and he had no one now to guide him but himself. His father's easy nature, and many misfortunes had served as a lesson to him, and he used to say, bitterly : " Believe every man to be a rogue until you prove him honest, and then don't trust him if you can help it." A poor opinion of human nature for a boy to have, but he had passed through a severe school ; he had seen his father go steadily round by round down the social ladder through no fault of his own, except his credulity, dragged down by the men who called themselves his friends, and who betrayed and ruined him, and then laughed at him for his folly in being duped so easily.

Oh, you may laugh at this if you please, and say such people only exist in books ; I tell you there are hundreds and thousands of them walking the earth to-day, shaking hands with their victims, coaxing, cajoling, flattering them, until the last dollar has been gained from them, the last favor granted, and then, when impending ruin stares the unhappy victim in the face, and the crash of falling fortune rattles in his ears, these quondam friends will be the first to turn from him, and will say wisely : " I told you so, I knew it must come sometime."

Harry Griffith had seen this ; he had seen his father almost heart-broken, and, boy as he was, it had bred hard and bitter thoughts of the world in him ; thoughts that the great game of life was not a game of chance, but one of skill, and that he who could play best, or pack the cards most skilfully, had the best chance of winning. He had loved his father dearly ; as children will generally love a pure-minded, affectionate parent, who never was harsh, but always kind and indulgent ; and his death was a bitter grief to him. During the few weeks he was at Mrs. Morton's the memory of his father seldom left his mind, and he vowed to himself again and again that he would " get even with the world ;" for what, or in what way he never paused to consider, he felt, somehow, that the world had done him a great wrong, and he determined to right himself. How he was to do it, gave him little thought ; youth is very hopeful, and castles in the air are cheap to build, as the material never gives out, and the workmen never strike for higher wages. Somehow, he was determined to succeed ; and his hopes were high,

and his spirits nothing daunted as he bade farewell to the land of his birth, and prepared to seek his fortune in another country.

"Good-bye, Mamie," he said, holding her in his arms while she sobbed on his shoulder as if her heart would break, "don't cry that way, I shall be back again before you think I am gone; and I shall bring a fortune for you, and then we shall all be happy."

"Oh, Harry, I wish you did not have to go; I feel as if I shall never see you again."

"Not see me again, no such luck; I shall be back in five years; and mind, I shall come back for *you*, and you only; for but for your sake I should never care to set foot on this island again. So keep up your spirits, write to me often, and don't get any foolish notions in your head about my not coming back. I've said "I will," and when I say that I mean it, and I'm hard to beat."

He sailed that night, and the voyage went pleasantly and smoothly enough for the first few days.

Past St. Lucia, well to windward of the island, passing Guadeloupe in the daytime, so that a good view could be obtained of the smoke-capped volcano of Souffriere, towering five thousand feet above the sea, and so running gently along the inside margin of the Windward Isles they reached St. Thomas on the fifth day out, and passed out into the broad Atlantic, steering for the American coast.

The winds were light and variable, and the passage promised to be a long and uneventful one; but on the twelfth day out, just as they were about the latitude of Cape Hatteras, the glass began to fall, and fell so steadily all day that although the wind had died away, and it was almost a dead calm at sundown, the Captain's face wore an anxious look as he ordered sail shortened, and everything stowed away as snugly as could be.

It was almost midnight, when the hurricane struck them in all its fury; the wind had been moaning in fitful puffs for some time before, and the sea had answered with a hollow moan, as if it knew it was about to be shaken from its calm repose, and protested against the liberty. The clouds had been banking up, and now the last ray of moonlight was obscured, and after a brief pause, and a few preliminary drops as a warning, the storm broke in all its fury; the wind came with one grand rush and roar, driving the rain before it with such fury that it seemed to have no time to form into drops but came down in straight lines.

The blast struck the noble little barque as if striving to bury

her beneath the waters in its fury ; but she struggled gallantly, and rose from its first embrace, quivering in every part, but intact, and boldly held her own against its fury. Again and again the fierce blast assailed her ; again and again the angry billows came leaping toward her as if they regarded her as the cause of their disquietude, and sought to bury her beneath their depths, but still the little barque held out, and as hour after hour had passed, and no leak was discovered, although both the fore and the main masts had been carried away, hopes began to be entertained that she would weather the gale.

The darkness was intense, and only by the frequent and vivid flashes of lightning could any glimpse be caught of the forward part of the vessel.

Suddenly there was a slight lull in the storm ; a short pause as if the armies of the elements were re-forming for another and a fiercer attack on the devoted little barque ; then in that lull arose a sound more terrible than the roar of the elements, a sound reverberating with terrible distinctness within a dozen yards of the doomed barque, "Ship ahoy !" Ere the helmsman could change the course of the vessel, a dazzling flash of lightning revealed to the startled crew the huge black form of an ocean steamer bearing down ; in another moment she had struck the devoted little barque amidships, cutting her in two ; there was a terrible crashing, grinding sound, a momentary check to the steamer, and then she drifted swiftly away, as the storm again broke over the spot where the barque had lately proudly floated, and which was now strewn with the *débris* of the wreck, and the forms of frantic, despairing men struggling madly for life in the tumultuous water.

## ACT 1.—FRIENDS, OR RIVALS.

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### SCENE I.

#### A PERFECT MUFF.

AUGUST nineteenth, eighteen hundred and seventy; time, evening; scene, McVittie's billiard room, Montreal.

“Will you go up and play a game of billiards, Gus,” said Frank Farron to his friend, Gus Fowler, pausing in their walk up Notre Dame street, opposite the saloon.

“No, Frank, I am in a hurry; I want to go to the concert at St. Patrick's Hall, to-night, and I cannot spare the time.”

“Oh! come along! it's just half-past five, and it will only take ten minutes; you've lots of time, come along. Perhaps we shall meet Charlie.”

“Who wants to see that muff? I'm sure I don't.”

“Oh, Charlie isn't a bad fellow, although he is a perfect muff. Come, we could nearly have played a game while we have been talking.”

“Well, I'll go up for a few minutes, but only to play one game.”

Frank laughed; it was a weakness of his companion's to always say that he would only play “one game,” but after that one game was played he would try “just one more” and then “just another,” until many games had been played.

As they entered the room they met the object of their late conversation, Charlie Morton. He was standing near a table, drawing on his coat, apparently having just finished a game. Sixteen years had passed lightly over his head, and he looked almost boyish yet. He was tall, well made and good-looking, with light auburn hair and blue eyes so peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon race. His light curly hair still grew thickly about the temples, and his long fair moustache hung with a graceful curl over a mouth which showed more lines of firmness than the other features gave any indication of. The peculiarities of his boyhood had matured with him in his advancing years, and he presented rather an analogous

appearance. He was very nearly being extremely handsome, but, somehow, he wasn't. It was almost impossible to say in what particular point he fell short, but it was clear that he could not be called exactly handsome; good-looking he undoubtedly was, but that was all. So he came very near being intellectual looking; the clear high forehead, the full wide temples, the firm lines around the mouth, and the clean cut strong chin seemed to indicate intellect and strength of character; but then the quiet, almost stupid expression of the face, the want of any depth or brilliancy in the pale blue eyes, dispelled the idea, and it appeared that, although he might not be a fool, he did not possess any great amount of talent, and that he would never achieve greatness unless some terrible emergency called forth powers which now lay dormant. This was the "muff," as his companions called him—behind his back—and his appearance really did not greatly belie the cognomen.

"Well, Charlie," said Farron, "have you been getting your hand in? Let us make a match."

"No, Gus; I've played a couple of practice games with Johnnie, and I have scarcely any more time to spare."

"Oh!" said Farron, with rather a peculiar smile, "on duty tonight, I suppose?"

"I don't know quite what you mean by 'on duty,'" replied Charlie, coloring up slightly; "I have an engagement this evening, and I mean to keep it."

"Going to the concert, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Alone?"

"No."

Mr. Farron did not pursue his inquiries any further, but smiled peculiarly with a half look towards Fowler, who also smiled.

Morton seemed for a moment as if about to resent the merriment of his friends, but quickly recovering himself he said pleasantly,

"Boys, I haven't time to play a game, but I can wait long enough for us to take a drink. What will you have? Gus, what is yours, a cock-tail?"

"Sir," replied Fowler, with an assumption of utmost gravity, "the man who offers me a 'cock-tail,'"—here he dropped the heroic, and added quickly, "offers me something I never refuse. Johnnie," to the bar-keeper, "mine's gin!"

While the three friends were waiting for their drinks, an exquisitely-dressed individual entered the room, and, after a hasty glance around, advanced with outstretched hand towards Fowler.

The new comer was a "swell" of the first magnitude; his costume was in the acme of fashion, and his whole appearance denoted a man who, having nothing to do, devotes a large portion of his time to adorning his person. In the present instance the person was worth some pains in adorning, for the stranger was tall, well made and rather handsome, in a womanish, effeminate style of appearance. He was exceedingly fair, with a warm, rich color which told of perfect health, his eyes were of the palest possible blue, and his hair of the lightest possible tinge of blonde. He called it "golden," but his less complimentary friends designated the hue as "molasses froth color," and, as far as actual similitude went, they were, probably, most correct. The face was an open good-humored one, but gave no signs of intellectual power, and looked something like what the face of an overgrown baby might resemble.

"Why, Polly, old fellow, where did you drop from?" exclaimed Fowler, seizing the outstretched hand, and shaking it warmly, "I thought you intended spending the winter in Europe?"

"Yaas, yaas, I did have some such idea, you know, but it's such awful slow work travelling alone, you know, especially when a fellow don't understand the language, you know. Ah! Frank, how are you, old fellow?"

"First rate, how have you enjoyed your trip?"

"Aw, pretty well, saw lots of strange sights, you know; was in Paris during the excitement at the declaration of war, you know, and saw the departure of the troops for Berlin. But I'm precious glad to get home again and see some of the boys, you know."

"Polly," said Fowler, who had been speaking to Morton, "allow me to introduce you to my friend, Mr. Morton; Charlie, this is my friend Mr. Theophilus Lancelot Polydor Johnson, whom for short we call 'Polly.' He's one of those lucky individuals who are blessed with industrious fathers who labor hard to amass a fortune in order that their sons might have the pleasure of spending it; and "Polly" bids fair to circulate his father's dollars with as much pains as the old gentleman took in saving them."

The two men shook hands, but not warmly; although not known to each other personally each had heard of the other, and there was an evident disposition toward a very cordial mutual dislike.

"When did you return, Polly?" asked Fowler.

"Just a week ago to-day."

"You've seen the Howsons, of course?"

"Yaas, yaas, I've seen them once or twice since my return. Awful jolly girl, Annie is, isn't she?"

"I haven't had the felicity of seeing the lady for some months, and am, therefore, unable to testify as to her jolliness. So she is kinder to you than she was before you went to Europe?"

"Yaas, she's evidently getting fond of me, and I like it."

Morton flushed up very suddenly, and took a step forward as if to address the speaker, but checking himself he walked to an unoccupied table and began knocking the balls about.

"Really, Polly," said Fowler, in a bantering tone, "you ought to be careful or you will steal the hearts of half the girls in Montreal. What with your "good looks" and "winning ways," to say nothing of your quarter of a million of dollars, you create fearful havoc amongst the fair sex, in justice to whom I think you ought to have a label put on your breast, 'dangerous.'"

"Stop your chaff, old fellow, and let us have a game. I have only time for one game; have to get home early to dress."

"What, are you going to the concert too?"

"Yaas,"

"Alone?"

"No, I think I shall take Annie."

Charlie Morton suddenly dropped the cue he had been knocking the balls about with, and, crossing to Johnson, said:

"I ask your pardon for my inquisitiveness, but, did I understand you to say that Miss Howson was to accompany you to the concert to-night?"

"Yaas, I said so."

"May I ask if Miss Howson made any engagement with you to go?"

"Well, no, not exactly; that is, you know, she told me she was going and asked me if I wouldn't go too: and I thought it was a hint, you know."

"It appears to me you take rather too much on yourself," replied Morton, warmly, "to announce in a public billiard-room on such slight grounds as that that you would 'take Annie.'" He turned to the bar-keeper, paid for the drinks he had ordered, and prepared to leave the saloon.

"Look here, old fellow, you know, if you are spooney in that

quarter, you know, I don't mind it. I don't care how many fellows there are after the thing I want, I can always win, you know, if I want to."

"Can you?" said Morton, his temper fast rising, "And so you think —"

"Oh! bother what he thinks," exclaimed Fowler, interrupting, "if we are to have a game of billiards, let us begin at once. Polly and I will play you two, if you like, that will make an even match."

Morton pulled off his coat, and quietly selected a cue; five minutes before no power could have induced him to lose the time necessary for a game, but the few careless words of Johnson's had so irritated him that he felt an unconquerable desire to "measure swords"—or, to be more correct—"cues" with the smiling gentleman who thought himself so invincible.

The game was 250 points up, and from an early stage it was evident that the contest rested between Morton and Johnson, Fowler and Farron being but indifferent players and neither of them contributing much to his partner's score. The two men were very evenly matched. Johnson was a brilliant, reckless player, attempting the most difficult strokes with a carelessness that showed clearly his immense self-conceit, but withal playing a strong game, far above the average. Morton, on the other hand, was a slow, careful player, who never seemed to do anything brilliant, made no long runs, and few "fancy shots," but his steady runs of ten or fifteen kept adding to his score in a way which more than counterbalanced the occasional runs of forty or fifty from his more showy opponent.

The game was closely contested all through, and as they turned the string into the last hundred, it stood, Morton, 235; Johnson, 201; it being the latter's turn to play.

"Look out, boys, now, and see me run out," he said, boastfully, as he played the first shot, a difficult carom, which he made. Fortune certainly seemed to turn suddenly in his favor; the balls broke splendidly and kept well together, and he continued to make shot after shot, until he had run the score up to 249, wanting only one to go out, and the balls lying well together for an easy carom.

"That's the way to do it," he said confidently, "I told you I always win," and leaning carelessly over the table he struck his

ball, but, playing half at random, made a "miscue" and missed the shot.

It was now Morton's turn to play, and he commenced with even more than his usual caution. It was a very trifling matter, the winning or losing of the game, but somehow he felt as if it was a personal struggle between Johnson and himself for superiority. During the long run Johnson had made he had suffered all the agony of defeat, and when he found he had another chance he was so nervous that he almost missed the first shot. Gaining nerve, however, as he went on, he kept the balls together and made the 15 points necessary to win the game; then turning to Johnson with a little smile of triumph, he said:

" You see, Mr. Johnson, you don't *always* win," and putting on his coat he left the saloon.

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## SCENE II.

### A PERFECT FLIRT.

THE same evening; place, Mr. Howson's residence on Sherbrooke street.

Mr. Howson was a retired merchant of considerable wealth, who, having acquired a fortune before he was too old to enjoy some of the pleasures of life, resigned his position in the business-world, and determined to spend the remainder of his days in quiet enjoyment, free from all the cares and troubles of mercantile life. He was a widower with two daughters, Annie aged nineteen, and Julia who had just attained the dignity of her sixteenth birthday. The establishment was presided over by a sister of the late Mrs. Howson, Miss Moxton, a maiden lady about whose age there was some doubt, but about whose temper there was none.

Miss Moxton and her eldest niece were alone in the splendidly furnished parlor, the former seated by the centre table, busily engaged on some worsted work, which she was working at with most praiseworthy application, and the latter listlessly turning over some music at the piano, and occasionally trying a few bars in a careless uninterested sort of way.

They were a perfect contrast, the aunt and niece. Miss Moxton was tall, angular, and exhibited rather too generous a development of bone. Never blessed with any great pretensions to good looks,

her features, partly on account of her thinness, and partly on account of a natural acidity of temper, had assumed a pinched and sharpened look which gave her somewhat of a bird-like appearance ; the high cheek bones, prominent nose, sharp grey eyes and thin sallow cheeks affording an outline which bore a fanciful resemblance to a bird of prey. Miss Moxton's nose was her peculiar feature ; originally intended for a Roman it had turned out a complete failure ; starting well at the top, it, somehow, projected so suddenly and formed so complete an arch that it could only be classed under the denomination of "hooked," but, half way down it suddenly underwent another change, and the tip turned up in the most aspiring and determined manner. It was a wonderfully flexible nose too, and the extent to which Miss Moxton could elevate it, when wishing to express her contempt or dislike of anything, was something tremendous. On such occasions she was accustomed to give her head a sudden toss and elevate the nasal organ with a sort of snort and an exclamation that it was "a shame," "a perfect shame," or other expressions indicative of her dislike. Miss Moxton's dress was plain, almost severely so, and the small quantity of hair which time had spared her, was brushed back from her forehead, and done up in a tight little bunch at the back of her head, having somewhat the appearance of half a French twist loaf. Altogether she gave the idea of being a severe, rigid woman, with rather determined ideas, and no hesitancy about expressing her opinion.

Annie Howson was a brunette, and a beautiful specimen of one, Her complexion was clear, with a rich warm color tinting her plump cheeks, face a pure oval, with a delicate Grecian nose, eyebrows so perfectly shaped that they at first caused a suspicion of penciling, and great masses of raven black hair which fell in magnificent profusion far below her waist. But it was in Miss Howson's eyes and mouth that her chief beauties lay ; the former were not exactly black, but a sort of velvety brown color, which deepened to black in moments of excitement. Very large, and bright, and bewitching were those eyes, and it was an ecstatic pleasure to gaze into their pure, limpid depths and fancy you read there the soul of truth and constancy. Pleasurable it was, but dangerous also, for, with all her appearance of guilelessness and innocence, Miss Howson was an arrant flirt, and delighted in using her beautiful eyes to lure captives to her feet and then sport with them. As for her mouth, it was perfect ; small, delicately-shaped and fringed with

thin, ruby-tinted lips it set one longing to kiss it; and when the coral fringes parted in a sparkling smile and disclosed two rows of small beautifully white teeth the charm was complete. The figure was in perfect keeping with the face, rather under the average height, full and round without any disposition towards stoutness, it was exactly suited to the face, and it was no wonder that Annie Howson was the acknowledged belle of the city, and that both young and old men bowed in admiration before her.

Miss Howson was what is known as an "accomplished young lady;" she could sing well, because nature had endowed her with a good, sweet, pure voice of considerable power, which art had not been able to spoil; could dance with becoming grace; play the piano with a certain amount of mechanical exactness; could speak French so that every Englishman and no Frenchman, would understand her perfectly; and possessed a sufficient smattering of geography to know that Poland was the capital of Russia; and of history to inform you that Romulus was the founder of the British Empire. Of astronomy she only knew that there was a man in the moon, and she often wished that she could take a trip to the moon to see that man. In fact Miss Howson had been "finished" at a fashionable uptown "academy for young ladies" in New York —where her father had sent her in preference to giving her a good sound education in Canada—and she had learned everything that was useless, and very little that was useful.

"What time is it, auntie?" asked Miss Howson, turning towards Miss Moxton who was facing the clock on the mantel-piece.

"A quarter-past seven."

"A quarter-past seven! I think Charlie might have been more punctual, he promised to be here at seven to practise this duet with me, before going to the concert."

"Perhaps he has been detained by business. It is quite early yet, the concert does not commence until eight."

"And it will take half an hour for me to get ready after he comes."

"Well, I'm sure," replied Miss Moxton with a toss of her head, "if you are in such a hurry why don't you get ready before he comes!"

"And sit here waiting for him! No, I thank you, I don't please to wait for any man."

"But you think nothing of keeping a gentleman waiting half an hour for you."

"Oh! that's quite another matter; no gentleman expects to find a lady ready to go out with him when he calls for her."

"But she ought to be. The want of punctuality in the young ladies of the present day is shameful, perfectly shameful," and Miss Moxton elevated her nose with a scornful snort as a protest against the unpunctual habits of modern young ladies.

There was silence in the room for a few minutes, and then Miss Howson, looking impatiently at the clock, rose and walked to the window.

"I wish Polly would come," she exclaimed petulantly, "I would go to the concert with him, and teach Mr. Charlie to be more punctual in future."

"Go with Mr. Johnson!" said Miss Moxton in surprise, "then you would have to go alone, for I should not accompany you."

"Well, what would be the harm; I don't see why a girl cannot go out with a gentleman without having some one dragged along all the while 'for propriety'; no one ever thinks of such a thing in New York; and I don't think Polly is a very dangerous person to trust one's self with."

"Dangerous or not," replied Miss Moxton with another toss of her head, "it would be very improper for you to go out alone with him unless you are engaged to him."

"Engaged to Polly! I must be very anxious to get married before I engaged myself to such a fool as he is."

"I'm sure," retorted Miss Moxton, "I wish you were engaged, or married to some good man—like Mr. Morton, for instance," she continued after a moment's pause.

Miss Howson turned from her aunt and walked to the mantelpiece to consult the clock, which would go on registering the fleeting seconds with such provoking regularity; but her color rose a little, and she kept her back to Miss Moxton as she replied, half petulantly, "Charlie, indeed! Why he is nearly old enough to be my father, and I've known him ever since I was a little girl."

"So much the better, my dear, you have known him long enough to learn to respect him; and, as for his age, thirty-five is just the right time for a man to get married."

"Yes, but to some one nearer his own age than I am; besides, Charlie is such a muff."

"I am surprised, Annie, to hear you use such an expression, especially as applied to Mr. Morton."

"Everybody says he is; even Polly calls him a muff."

"Because everybody says a thing does not follow that it is true. I'm sure I never saw anything 'muffish' in Mr. Morton; he is one of the nicest, most agreeable gentleman I ever met."

"But he is so shy; I don't believe he ever kissed a girl in his life."

"I should think his wife would not be apt to find fault with him on that account. I hate your flirting men, making love to a dozen different girls without intending to marry one."

"And I like a fellow who can make himself agreeable to a girl. I have no great fancy for your 'quiet gentlemen.'"

Further conversation was prevented by a ring of the bell, and almost immediately afterwards the delinquent entered the room, looking very hot and uncomfortable as if he had dressed in a hurry, and rushed off in haste to keep his appointment, knowing he was late. Miss Howson looked at the clock which pointed to half-past seven, and Mr. Morton following her glance, grew more uncomfortable.

"I am very sorry, Annie," he commenced, hesitatingly, "that I am so late, I was detained—"

"By business, of course; that is always a gentleman's excuse."

"No, not exactly business, but I was unexpectedly detained. I am sorry about the duet; I suppose there is not time to try it now, if we want to hear the first part of the concert?"

"I have been trying it all the afternoon, but I could not get on very well without you. I have a great mind not to go to the concert now, just to punish you."

"It will be pleasant punishment, if you will let me remain here and practice the duet with you."

Miss Howson stood undecided for a moment and then said:

"I think we had better go. I promised to meet some friends there, besides, auntie would be disappointed."

"Oh, don't mind me," exclaimed Miss Moxton, "I don't care at all about going."

Another ring of the bell, and in a few minutes Mr. Johnson entered the room in considerable haste.

"Ah, Miss Howson, afraid I would be too late, you know, didn't want to miss the concert, we'll be in plenty of time, if it does not take you too long to get ready, you know," he paused as he noticed Morton, and looked towards Miss Howson. That young lady did not feel very well at ease, and, wishing to gain a moment's time to collect her thoughts, introduced the two gentlemen.

"Mr. Johnson allow me to introduce to you my friend Mr. Morton, Mr. Morton, Mr. Johnson."

Morton made the slightest possible inclination of his head and said, very stiffly,

"I think I have met the gentleman once already to-day."

"Oh, yaas, yaas!" said Mr. Johnson, "billiards, you know, lost by a fluke; shan't lose next time. We'll be late, Miss Howson," he continued, "unless we hurry."

Miss Howson had had time to recover herself, and in the brief moments occupied by the introduction she had decided, in her own mind, which of the two men it would be best to break with, if she was forced to renounce her present flirtation with both. Both men were rich, Johnson was the wealthier of the two, but Morton was also rich and doing a large, safe, paying business. In all her flirtations, and they were numerous, Miss Howson always took care for the contingency of the flirtation ending matrimonially and, therefore, she seldom flirted with any but "eligible" parties. In the present case she had renewed an old flirtation with Johnson, on his return from England, but she had no intention of marrying him, and could better afford to break with him than with Morton, who was a great friend of her father's, and whom she really liked, although not able to persuade herself that she loved him enough to promise to become his wife when he asked the momentous question which she sometimes thought she could see trembling on his lips. The fact was Miss Howson fancied herself in love with some one else, and counted on Morton's help to gain her father's consent to her marriage, which she knew he would oppose; she, therefore, was anxious to keep on good terms with Morton, at least for the present, and Mr. Johnson was doomed to be snubbed accordingly.

"You have made a mistake, Mr. Johnson," she said, "and labor under some misunderstanding. I made no engagement to go to the concert with you, for auntie and I promised long ago to go with Charlie. I said I hoped to meet you there, but I never led you to believe that I could go with you." She turned to Morton and said, "Sit down five minutes, Charlie, and I will get ready to go with you; pray excuse me, Mr. Johnson, we shall be late unless I hurry," and, bowing slightly to that astonished gentleman, she left the room.

Miss Moxton had retired some time before to don a very stiff-looking bonnet and a wonderfully plain shawl, and the two

gentlemen left together looked at each other for a moment very much like two dogs who meet in the street and seem to be undecided whether to fight or not.

Johnson was more annoyed than he cared to show ; he really liked Annie Howson, and had settled it in his own mind that he would marry her sometime, when he had got tired of his bachelor life, and he did not at all relish the quiet way in which Mr. Morton seemed prepared to contest the prize with him. Of course, he knew that he had no positive engagement with Miss Howson about the concert, but he took the liberty of doubting Miss Howson's word, and did not believe that Morton had any engagement either, and Mr. Johnson chafed at what he considered a preference shown to his rival.

Morton walked to the piano, and began softly practising the duet he was to have tried with Annie. Johnson stood by the centre-table turning over the leaves of a photograph album without looking at it ; he was undecided whether it was best for him to go or remain until Annie returned, when the door opened and Julia Howson entered the room.

“ Good evening, Mr. Morton,” she said with a merry smile crossing to Charlie and putting her arm familiarly on his shoulder, “ I am ever so much obliged to you for those beautiful chessmen and board ; they are just lovely. Annie says I am only wasting my time learning chess ; what do you think, will I ever make a good player ? ”

“ If you take time and have patience to learn, you might,” replied Charlie, “ but I am afraid you are too great a madcap ever to emulate Morphy or Staunton.”

The girl pulled his ears playfully, she looked on Charlie as a big brother who humored and petted her, and she was rather proud of it. Noticing Johnson for the first time she spoke to him, and asked carelessly if he was going to the concert.

Mr. Johnson looked a little annoyed, but recovering himself he said with a smile : “ I haven't got anyone to go with me, you know, and my ma don't allow me to go to places of public amusement alone. If you would promise to take care of me, and your aunt doesn't object,” appealing to Miss Moxton, who had just re-entered the room, “ I should like to go. I have secured a couple of good seats, you know, and, as the fellow says in the play ‘ the carriage waits.’ ”

Miss Julia was nothing loth to accept the offer, and, after some persuasion, Miss Moxton gave her consent, and the party started for the concert, Charlie, Miss Moxton and Annie in one carriage, Mr. Johnson and Julia in another.

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### SCENE III.

#### A PERFECT FIX.

TWELVE o'clock on the same night; place, Mr. Morton's bed-room.

The concert had not proved successful, as far as Mr. Morton individually was concerned. Mr. Johnson, by a private arrangement with one of the ushers, expressed in current coin, had managed to get his seats changed for two immediately behind Miss Howson and her aunt, and Miss Annie had kept up an animated flirtation with him all the evening, very much to Mr. Morton's annoyance, and greatly to Miss Moxton's disgust.

Mr. Morton now sat in his own room, indulging in a quiet smoke, and thinking over the events of the evening. He was trying to make up his mind whether he was jealous, and, if so, whether he loved Annie Howson, and could trust her enough to ask her to be his wife.

He thought not only of the present, but of the past. His memory took him back to ten years ago, when he had left his island home to seek his fortune in a new country where there was a wider scope for him, and he pictured in his mind's eye the two loved ones he had left behind him, his mother and sister. Fancy recalled to him Mamie's tearful entreaty to be taken with him, and the thought added to the bitterness of the feeling that he could never see her smiling face, or hear her loving voice again.

On his arrival in Canada Mr. Howson had been one of his earliest and best friends, and it was to his business he had succeeded when that gentleman retired. He remembered Annie when she was a little girl in short frocks, with a perpetual stickiness about the face, superinduced by the too-liberal allowance of candies provided by himself, and before she had gone to New York to be "finished." He remembered how he had petted and learned to love the little girl, who used to impose on his good nature, and tease him into letting her have her own way in everything, when

he could gratify her wishes or influence her father to indulge her ; and now it seemed to him that that love for the child, as a child, had strengthened into the love of a man for a woman, and he hoped to win her as his wife.

Yet he was not altogether sure that he did desire Annie Howson for a wife, or that she would make him the loving and affectionate "helpmeet" that he often pictured to himself; for there would rise before him the picture of his "beau ideal" amongst women, his sister, and he thought how often he had said that he would never marry any woman until he could meet one like his dead sister.

"Dead sister." Ah ! there was the pain and the bitterness of it. Four years after his arrival in Canada his mother had died, and he wrote to Mamie to come to him, as he was able then to provide a home for her. Her answer was that she would leave the next week in the barque *Montezuma*, and after that all that he knew of her fate was the following paragraph from an American paper, published some five weeks after the sailing of the *Montezuma* from Barbadoes :

"The ship *Tropic Bird*, from Demerara for Philadelphia, reports that on the 24th May, while off Cape Hatteras, she picked up a boat found bottom upwards, marked, *Montezuma*, New York. It is supposed that the *Montezuma* went down in the gale of 23rd idem, and that all hands are lost. The captain of the *Tropic Bird* reports having encountered a very severe gale, which carried away his foremast, on 22nd May, and supposes the *Montezuma* was caught in the same storm and went down."

He remembered the deep, deep, unutterable grief he experienced on seeing the announcement, and the long patient waiting for news from that other boat in which he hoped Mamie might be. Then came the recollection of letters from a friend in New York, giving full particulars of the loss of the vessel, as gathered from the owners, and related to them by the one surviving sailor. Vividly he recalled the nervous anxiety with which he read the shipping news for months and months afterwards, in the blind hoping against hope that his loved one might have been saved and be restored to him ; and then came the recollection of the gradual dying out of hope and the unwilling acknowledgment that the envious waters had snatched his darling sister from him.

Nearly six years had passed since then, yet at times the bitterness of the loss he had sustained would return to him, and he

would sit wondering and thinking whether he could ever take again the same interest in life he had done before the first grand object of his life—the happiness of his sister—had been destroyed by her death.

The midnight hour had passed, and a new day was dawning ere he decided to go to bed. He had not thoroughly made up his mind whether the memory of his dead sister was not dearer to him than the living woman he half thought he loved; but he thought he owed it to the living woman to marry her if she willed it so, and to strive to make her a loving and faithful husband.

And so while the first streaks of morning were illuminating the sky, and Miss Annie Howson was dreaming of a certain doctor she hoped to win, Mr. Morton fell into a troubled slumber, after having resolved to offer Miss Annie his hand and fortune at the first favorable opportunity.

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#### SCENE IV.

##### A PERFECT GENTLEMAN.

AUGUST twenty-third, eighteen hundred and seventy; time, nine o'clock in the evening; place, Dr. Griffith's consultation-room, Beaver Hall Hill, Montreal.

At the close of the prologue Harry Griffith was left struggling in the water. Of course, he did not perish, for the same steamer which had caused the disaster succeeded, in spite of the storm, in launching enough boats to rescue the crew of the *Gazelle*. The steamer was bound for New Orleans, and from thence Griffith made his way to New York, and finally to Toronto where he remained three years with his uncle. Canada quickly proved too slow for his fiery energy and yearning for rapid success; and so, having a small amount of money, he went to New York to seek his fortune. For the next four years he had varying success, but, on the breaking out of the war, he was lucky enough to be engaged in the office of a broker who was well informed of the various army movements and political events transpiring at that time, and, using his information to his own advantage, he made a rapid fortune.

Bold, unscrupulous, and almost unprincipled, he was one of the leading spirits in the mercurial risings and fallings of the value

of gold during 1863-4, and his profits at times were enormous. The bad feeling instilled into him in boyhood remained, and he looked on all mankind as his natural enemies, whom it was his duty to fight, and conquer, if possible. He was known "on the street" as a hard man to deal with, honest, in so far as not to overstep the law, but tricky and always ready to take any advantage he could gain. The man's whole strength of mind and energy seemed to be centered on one object, to gain money, and he sacrificed everything for that.

Yet there was one tender memory left in Harry Griffith's heart, and one humanizing influence clinging to him, his love for Mamie Morton. The old feeling of his boyish love was strong in him, and he fondly pictured the time when he could claim her as his own. But that time seemed distant. Charlie still continued his objection, and, as Mamie said she would never marry without her brother's consent, Harry was almost driven to despair.

Then came Charlie's emigration to Canada, and, subsequently, his mother's death. Then all the strongest passions of Griffith's nature called on him to make one effort for the possession of the girl he loved, and, unfortunately, circumstances helped him only too well.

He had corresponded with Mamie, and knew of her departure for New York, *en route* for Canada to join her brother. He saw the announcement of the wreck of the *Montezuma*, and grieved for Mamie's loss as deeply as her brother did. But Mamie was not lost; three weeks after the reported loss of the *Montezuma*, the two sole survivors, Tom Bowles and Mamie Morton, arrived in New York, and Mamie, knowing no one else there, called at Harry Griffith's office.

When he found Mamie Morton was alive, his first thought was to make her his wife before Charlie could learn of her rescue; this he knew it would be very difficult to persuade Mamie to do, but, prompted by his evil genius, he determined to tell her that Charlie was dead, and either inform her of the falsehood after their marriage, or trust to chance that the brother and sister should not meet.

His scheme was perfectly successful. Mamie never for a moment doubted his story that Charlie had died of typhoid fever, and so she married Griffith a week after her arrival in New York. After his marriage he felt some little shame at the trick he had played on an unsuspecting girl, and so put off the disclosure of the

secret until, at last, he determined in his own mind that it was best not to disclose it at all, and so brother and sister lived on for six years, each mourning the other as dead.

The union did not prove a happy one. Harry Griffith had got into the habits of a fast life before his marriage, and he was not a man likely to render the domestic hearth happy. The constant excitement of a speculative life engendered a craving for other excitement, and unfitted him for the calm delights of home ; and so, almost before the first year of marriage had passed, Mamie found herself a neglected wife, and the evenings which her husband ought to have passed with her, were spent at the club, or amongst his gay companions.

Still she loved him fondly, devotedly, and comforted herself with the idea that he was true to her, and when her little girl was born, a year after their marriage, she was happy again in the smiles of her baby, and hoped to regain the entire love of her husband.

But it was not to be. Harry Griffith grew more and more indifferent to his wife, and although her love for him was unchanged, she could not blind herself to the fact that he had ceased to love her. So passed five years, and then came a crisis in Harry Griffith's business, and his subsequent departure from New York. The speculations which had so prospered formerly, now all went wrong ; stocks would go up when they ought to have gone down, and down when they were confidently expected to go up ; and so the fortune Griffith had amassed was nearly all lost, and some of his later transactions, in his desperate efforts to recover his losses, were so questionable that he found it safest to leave New York for a while.

He came to Montreal about one year before our story opened, and entered practice as a doctor, he having studied medicine in Toronto, although he had not practised in New York. Mamie did not come with him, and he represented himself as a bachelor.

His acquaintance with Charlie Morton was renewed shortly after his arrival in Montreal, and Charlie introduced him to some of his friends, among others to the Howsons. Griffith soon began to pay rather marked attention to Miss Annie, and he was the "Doctor" whom that young lady fancied herself in love with.

Matters had gone on very pleasantly for him until within the last few weeks, when Mamie had suddenly arrived in Montreal, and declared her intention to remain with him. Unable to induce

her to return to New York, he had taken a house at Longueuil for her, and there she was now residing with her daughter.

Dr. Griffith sat in his study, thinking over his position, and endeavoring to see a way out of the difficulties by which he was surrounded. What he had intended as a flirtation with Miss Howson, had grown to a passion with him ; not only was he fascinated by her beauty, but her fortune was also a consideration to him, and he chafed at the restraint which rendered it impossible for him to marry her.

Was it impossible ?

It was impossible while he was a married man ; but, if he should become a widower ?

He sat down to think about it.

There was a ring at the bell, and soon afterwards the servant ushered in a man who said he wanted to see the doctor.

He was a seedy-looking individual, who staggered slightly as he entered, and there came in with him a strong smell of spirits. He was dressed in rusty black, and his hat was in the last stages of dilapidation. He drew out a very dirty pocket-handkerchief, with which he dusted his boots, then wiped his face, and returned it to his pocket, from which he drew a crumpled card, and handed it to Griffith with a slight bow.

“ Dr. Griffith, I suppose ; allow me to offer you my card.”

The doctor took the card, and read the name written on it,

“ MR. JAMES HARWAY,

General Agent,

Montreal.”

“ Take a seat, Mr. Harway ; what can I have the pleasure of doing for you ? ”

Mr. Harway carefully deposited the dilapidated hat on the floor, cleared his throat with a preliminary “ ahem ! ” seated himself, and said :

“ I don’t suppose, Doctor, you remember ever seeing me before.”

“ I really do not remember having had the pleasure,” replied Griffith, seeing that the other hesitated, and thinking he had rather a queer patient to deal with.

“ No ; you don’t remember ? I didn’t think you would, because you never did see me before, that I know of. You see I like to put things plain for I always acts as a perfect gentleman.”

The doctor bowed as the only answer to this speech. He was getting more and more puzzled about his patient.

" You've lived in New York, haven't you?" resumed Mr. Harway, after another slight polish of his face with the dirty handkerchief.

" Yes ; I resided there for several years. May I ask what is your business with me ? I am rather busy just at present, as you may perceive," and he pointed to some manuscript which lay on the table.

Mr. Harway hitched himself about half an inch forward on his chair, again had recourse to the handkerchief, and replied :

" Certainly, certainly ; never hinder a gentleman's time, and being a gentleman myself I always acts as such."

He paused again, and Griffith, thinking it better to take the initiative, asked, abruptly,

" What is your complaint ? "

" That's it ; you've hit it. My complaint is a tightness in the chest."

" Ah ! the result, probably, of indigestion."

" No. I think it is the result of having nothing to digest, caused principally by an emptiness in the pocket."

" Oh ! " The doctor looked at his visitor for a few seconds while a quiet smile played about the corners of his mouth. " You're a wag, I suppose, and have a begging letter, or something of the sort, about you."

" Please don't insult me, sir ; I'm a perfect gentleman, and I always acts as such ; begging letters I'm above. Do you think I look like a man with a begging letter ? "

The doctor looked at him and was forced to admit to himself that his visitor did not look like a man who would carry around a begging letter with any great probability of success.

Mr. Harway was not nice to look at. He was ugly, he was dirty ; soap and water were evidently too great luxuries for him to indulge in, and he had the general appearance of being thoroughly soaked in bad whiskey.

" Well, if you don't come to beg, and you do not want to consult me professionally, what do you want ? "

" I want to borrow five dollars," replied Mr. Harway, promptly, " or, to put it plainer, I want you to pay me five dollars on account of what you owe me for keeping something for you."

" Keeping something for me."

" Yes."

" What have you kept for me ? "

"A secret."

Dr. Griffith looked again at the man. Mr. Harway stood his gaze calmly, and met his eye steadily, and the two men regarded each other for a moment, as if each was mentally measuring the other's strength.

"You see, doctor," resumed Mr. Harway, "I know all about the gal as was thought to be drowned and wasn't; and I know her brother would give a'most anything to know she is alive. I don't understand your game in keeping Mr. Morton in the dark, seeing you're kind of friendly with him, but that ain't my business, and I'm a perfect gentleman, and don't interfere with what don't concern me."

Dr. Griffith regarded his visitor for a few seconds, and then said very quietly:

"Look here, my dilapidated friend, I do not understand what you mean by my secret; but, it appears you fancy you can extort money from my fears about something you pretend to know. If by 'the gal as was thought to be drowned' you mean Miss Morton, I should be only too glad to know she is alive, but you may as well understand at once that you can make no money out of either Mr. Morton or myself, by your story, whatever it may be. I shall see Charlie to-night, and warn him not to be imposed on by you."

Mr. Harway sat stupidly looking at the speaker, and mechanically drew out the dirty handkerchief and wiped his face with it. At last he gave vent to the exclamation.

"Well, I'm blessed!"

"I'm glad to hear it," said Griffith, smiling quietly. "I should never have thought it, judging from your appearance. You do not look as if you were greatly blessed."

"I'm blessed!" reiterated Mr. Harway, and then paused.

"You said that before," replied the smiling doctor.

"I'm blessed if you aint a going to swear the gal was drowned, an' I saved her life myself, an' brought her to New York, an' saw you with her."

"You!" exclaimed the doctor, springing up; "you!"

"Yes, me; I'm a perfect gentleman, and as such bound to tell the truth; my name is Tom Bowles, although it's more convenient for me to call myself Harway just at present. I brought the girl to your office six years ago, and I saw both of you several times afterwards."

Dr. Griffith paused before replying. He did not really care very much whether Charlie Morton knew that his sister was alive or not, except that it might interfere with a half-formed plan in his mind, which he scarcely allowed himself to think of yet. He believed that Harway was really the man Bowles, and that he knew that Mamie was alive, but did he know where she was at present? He would find out, if possible, whether Harway was in possession of sufficient information to give him any present annoyance; in a week or two—he did not finish that thought, but asked, abruptly,

“When did you last see Miss Morton?”

“Six years ago,” answered Mr. Harway, thrown off his guard by the suddenness of the question; but he continued with scarcely any alteration in his tone, as he saw he had been caught in a trap, and a careless observer would have noticed no change in the man’s tone or manner.

“Six years ago was the first time I saw her; and two weeks ago was the last.”

Griffith had watched him closely, and noticed his hesitation, he therefore asked him,

“Where did you last see her?” \*

“In New York,” answered Mr. Harway, boldly. He knew he had to lie, and he told the lie he thought would look most like the truth.

“Very well,” replied the doctor, relieved to find that no immediate danger need be expected, as Harway would not be likely to search in Longueuil for a person he supposed was in New York, “I will make you a fair offer, my friend; bring Mamie Morton to me within a month, and I will give you not five, but five hundred dollars. Until you find her you will get nothing.”

“Then she is alive; you admit that?”

“Not at all. You say you saw her two weeks ago, I say she has been dead for years; if you are right, and she is alive, find her; no one will be more pleased to see her than I. Tell me where she is and earn your reward.”

“Couldn’t you let me have that five dollars on account.”

“Not a penny. You are an impudent impostor, trying to obtain money under false pretences, and you ought to feel obliged to me for letting you off instead of handing you over to the police. Go!”

Mr. Harway made a desperate clutch at his dilapidated hat, and prepared to depart.

"All right, doctor; I'm a perfect gentleman, and can take a hint. You'll keep your word if I find the girl?"

"Yes."

Mr. Harway bowed himself out, and when he had reached the sidewalk he soliloquized thus:

"The gal is alive, and there is some reason why the Doc wants to keep her out of the way; if I can find her my fortune is as good as made. Where is she? Not in New York, that's sure, or he wouldn't have dropped on me so quick. In Montreal? I think not. Maybe he's got her somewhere across the water. Anyhow, I can watch him. Maybe he gets letters from her, and servants can easily be bought. I want that five hundred dollars, for I'm a perfect gentleman, and I like to earn an honest living, provided I don't have to work for it."

He polished his face with the dirty handkerchief, produced a plug of tobacco, bit off a piece about the size of a walnut, gave it a twist with his tongue, sailor fashion, as he placed it in his cheek, and staggered away.

Meanwhile Dr. Griffith returned to his seat and reflected on the interview.

"Another danger to be guarded against," he thought, "but scarcely likely to give trouble. He won't tell Charlie as long as he thinks he can bleed me. I have only to persuade Mamie to remain in Longueuil until her confinement—she is as safe there as anywhere—and after that—" he paused, even to himself he did not like to confess the thought which was in his mind.

## ACT II.—ACROSS THE RIVER.

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### SCENE I.

#### MR. HARWAY MAKES A DISCOVERY.

TIME, August twenty-fourth, eighteen hundred and seventy; place, the village of Longueuil.

Mr. Harway passed what he considered a pleasant evening, after his interview with Dr. Griffith. He got drunk. He always thought he passed a pleasant evening when he got drunk, but discovered his error next morning when he awoke with a racking headache.

He was not habitually an early riser, but this morning he was later than usual, and it was almost one o'clock before he got out of bed. He was enjoying all the miseries of a too-free indulgence in bad whiskey, and, fancying a walk would do him good, he started from his boarding house and strolled down Notre Dame street.

It was a fine bright day, not too warm, and Mr. Harway found his walk invigorated him so much that he extended it down St. Mary street as far as the Longueuil ferry. He had no definite object in walking in that direction, but after he had reached the ferry he suddenly took a fancy to cross to the other side. He thought the trip on the water would help to restore his shattered nerves, and assist in his recovery from the last night's debauch, so he invested ten cents in a ticket, and took a seat on deck, so that he could extract some comfort from a short black pipe.

He had to wait some ten minutes before the boat started, and he occupied his time in calling to mind, as well as possible, all that had passed between Dr. Griffith and himself on the previous evening. He was trying to determine whether it was really worth while to spend his time hunting for a person he had never seen, and who may have been dead for years, as Dr. Griffith said she was.

He had never seen Mamie Morton, for the simple reason that he was not Tom Bowles, as he had claimed, but a brother of Bowles'

wife. Bowles had told the story of the wreck of the *Montezuma*, and how he had saved the life of a Miss Morton, a lady passenger, and also how she had married a gentleman in New York, and that her brother had died a few days prior to her arrival. The story made but little impression on him at the time, but he noticed as a curious feature in the case, that no mention had been made in the papers of the saving of the young lady, and that Bowles was reported as the only survivor.

Mr. Harway had been compelled to "leave his country for his country's good," and selected Montreal as a place well suited for his peculiar faculty of getting a living without working for it. He had by chance become acquainted with a clerk in Morton's office who was rather more fond of talking about his employer's affairs than he should have been.

From him Harway learned enough to show him that Morton was the brother of the girl who had been saved from the wreck of the *Montezuma* by Bowles, and who was reported to have died. He also learned, for the first time, that Morton believed his sister had been drowned.

This was sufficient for Mr. Harway, and he soon came to the conclusion that there was "a game," as he expressed it, and that Dr. Griffith was the prime mover in it. It did not take him long to find that gentleman, and the review already recorded was the result.

Mr. Harway landed at Longueuil, and, being in a pedestrian mood, strolled about half a mile out of the village. Suddenly he started, and instinctively dodging behind a neighboring tree, cautiously peeped forth.

The sight which met his view was not very alarming, a lady and gentleman accompanied by a little girl, apparently five or six years old, were entering the gate of a pretty little cottage standing a few yards back from the road.

The gentleman was Dr. Griffith.

Mr. Harway remained behind the tree until Dr. Griffith and his companions had entered the cottage; then he produced the dirty handkerchief, polished his face a bit, and gave vent to the expression.

"I'm blessed!"

He really seemed to think he was "blessed"—as he expressed it—and, sitting on the grass, he pulled up the skeleton of a collar

which did duty with him as linen, and held sweet communion with himself.

"I'm blessed," soliloquized he, "if I aint hit it right off. That must be the gal, and the little one is a responsibility incurred since the gal wasn't drowned. I suppose Bowles told the truth when he said he saw them married; that will give me a grip on the Doc somehow. Can't see his game; but, I can see how to make it pay me. There is something or other he wants to keep dark, but what his game is I can't see."

Mr. Harway stared very hard at the tree he was resting under, as if he expected to find there an explanation of Dr. Griffith's conduct. Apparently, however, the explanation was not easy to arrive at, for he sat for nearly half an hour before he seemed to have come to any conclusion which was satisfactory to him.

The explanation of Dr. Griffith's conduct in hiding Mamie's existence, and the fact of his marriage, from Charlie Morton, seemed to flash on Mr. Harway all of a sudden, for he sprang up from the grass and, waving the dirty handkerchief in triumph over his head, exclaimed :

"I'm blessed! I see it now just as clear as a yard of pump water. It's another woman."

Then Mr. Harway sat down to think about it.

The minutes stretched themselves into hours, and the sun began to sink in the west, but still Dr. Griffith did not leave the house, and Mr. Harway maintained his position behind the tree. Mr. Harway was hungry, he had eaten nothing all day, and Mr. Harway was thirsty, but still he kept his post and watched the little cottage. He had quite made up his mind now as to what course of action he should pursue, and only wanted to be quite sure that the lady he had seen with Dr. Griffith was his wife; once that was ascertained he felt assured he could blackmail the doctor as much as he pleased.

It was nearly six o'clock when Dr. Griffith left the house, and proceeded towards the ferry, and Mr. Harway carefully kept himself concealed until he had passed; he then approached the house and boldly rung the bell.

A smart little girl came to the door and inquired his business.

"Does Dr. Griffith live here?"

"Yes, sir; but he has just gone over to Montreal."

"Is Mrs. Griffith in?"

"Yes; do you wish to see her?"

"No; I only wanted to know if Dr. Griffith left a parcel here for me. He promised he would leave some medicine here, and I was to call for it; will you see if he left anything for Mr. Thompson—my name is Thompson."

The girl made the requested inquiry, and, of course, answered, as Mr. Harway expected, that nothing had been left for him.

He then drew the girl into a little casual conversation, and learned that the family had only lately arrived from New York, and had been at the cottage a few weeks.

Fully satisfied with his day's work, Mr. Harway wended his way towards the ferry, thinking over his future plan of action.

"I shan't tackle him just yet," he thought. "I will let a few days elapse and, meantime, I can watch him, and, maybe, find out something more as will be useful."

He had recourse to the dirty handkerchief and black pipe as he reached the ferry-boat, and, when seated on the upper deck, he again expressed himself, half-aloud.

"I'm blessed!"

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## SCENE II.

THE scene which had transpired in the little cottage had not been a peaceful one. Doctor Griffith had visited his wife with the idea of securing her consent to remain in Longueuil for the next two weeks, but his mission had not been so successful as he had anticipated.

Mamie was taking a walk with her little girl when the doctor landed from the ferry-boat and met them, and they strolled up together towards the cottage.

The doctor did not feel in a particularly amiable mood, and Mamie was far from being pleased at the way she had been treated since her arrival in Montreal; the walk to the cottage was, therefore, almost a silent one. The little girl ran ahead for most of the way, and from time to time endeavored to attract the attention of her father with some casual, childish remark, but with only partial success.

Arrived at the cottage Dr. Griffith prepared to urge his reasons for Mamie's remaining in Longueuil until after the birth of her baby; but before he could do so she took the initiative by remarking:

"Harry, I want to go over to Montreal to live; it seems so strange for you to be living there, and Fan"—that was the little girl—"and I over here. Besides, you come to see me so seldom, and I am getting nervous about my sickness, and I should like to have you with me when I am ill."

Her husband drew her towards him and tried hard to show a semblance of the love he did not feel; but the kiss he imprinted on her forehead was very cold, and she half turned from him with a sigh.

"Don't get foolish fancies in your head," he said, playfully smoothing her hair, "you will get through all right, and, of course, I will be with you; but, I don't see what good can be done by your going to Montreal to live. You have a nice, comfortable house here, and it would be better for you and Fan to remain here until the winter sets in, then, of course, you must move over to Montreal."

She remained silent for a few moments, her head drooped on his shoulder, and a few tears forced themselves into her eyes as she answered :

"Harry, you used to love me once—oh! how long ago it seems—don't keep away from me now, it won't be for long. I feel that I shall never live through the next few weeks, let me die with you. I have no one but you and Fan, let me be with both of you to the last."

Her head rested on his shoulder, and she sobbed convulsively as she clung to him. He held her tenderly in his arms, but there was no love in his heart as he tried to soothe her, and drive away her fears. He remembered how, years ago, he had loved this woman, and hung on her lightest word; how he had sinned to win her, and how he had gloried in the fact of having won her, and he wondered at himself that he could now be so cold and insensible to her caresses; but another love had entered his heart, and it was dead to the one who loved him so well, even after she knew he no longer cared for her.

Woman's love is a curious anomaly; pure and holy in itself, it so often becomes attached to some impure and unworthy object, but, like the limpet to the rock, it clings on till death; and, although conscious of the unworthiness of the object of its adoration, still it cannot change its devotion, but remains constant in its affection to the last.

Mamie Griffith knew her husband well and thoroughly. She knew him as a bold, bad, unscrupulous man, and was only too well assured that he had ceased to love her; but at this moment all the old tenderness for him came back, and she almost persuaded herself that she might yet re-kindle the affection of the past within his breast, and win him back to her.

She cried softly and quietly on his shoulder for a few seconds, and he continued to smooth her hair and try to calm her excited feelings.

"Come, come, Mamie," he said, "you are exciting yourself unnecessarily; there is no danger; you will be all right in a few weeks, and, meanwhile, you can be very nice and comfortable here. I will come over every day to see you, and soon you will laugh at your own foolish fears."

His tone was soft and gentle, and he continued to caress her; but she drew slightly away from him, and looked up at him in partial distrust.

"Harry," she said, "why do you want to keep me out of Montreal? Ever since I came from the States you have tried to prevent my visiting the city, and have made me remain here as much as possible. What is the reason?"

"There is no reason," he answered, drawing her to him and pressing her forehead with his lips, "it is only your own imagination. I think it would be better for you to remain here until the baby is born; you are not strong, and the air here is purer than in a large city."

"But I want to be in Montreal; I want to be with you."

"And I say you shall stay here." His voice was cold and hard now, and there was no gentleness or tenderness in its tones.

She drew herself quite away from him and stood proudly regarding him for a moment; then she said, not hastily nor angrily, but slowly and with emphasis:

"I shall move over to Montreal on the first of next month, when our lease is up."

"What?"

"I mean what I say. You have some scheme or plot which I don't understand now, which requires my absence from Montreal; but I won't be made an innocent party to any of your schemes. Trust me, Harry, oh, trust me as you used to when we were children together"—the woman's voice had grown soft and tender again, and there were tears in her eyes—"and I will be true and

loving to you, as I have always tried to be ; but"—and here her voice grew hard and firm again—"I am your wife, and as long as I live I will allow no woman to usurp my place. You might have ceased to love me, but you have no right to love any other woman while I am alive, and I won't permit it."

She stood boldly and defiantly before him now ; and he lowered his eyes as he answered her, half soothingly :

"Don't let us have a scene, Mamie ; you shall not come to Montreal now ; I do not please that you should. In the course of three or four weeks you will be well over your sickness, and then you can come."

"I will come next week," she answered obstinately, and then sat down exhausted on the sofa, and burst into a passionate flood of tears. All the jealousy in the woman's nature was aroused ; she feared that her husband loved another, and she was of too fiery a disposition to remain quiet under the insult. He might not love her, but he should love no one else while she lived.

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### SCENE III.

#### DR. GRIFFITH MAKES UP HIS MIND.

DR. GRIFFITH and Mr. Harway crossed on the same boat from Longueuil, but the latter, noticing the doctor, made himself scarce, and escaped observation. It was no part of the plan of systematic blackmail he proposed, that his victim should know too soon the information he had gained ; in fact Mr. Harway was not very certain that he had gained any very important information yet, but he had no doubt that, by quietly watching the doctor for a few days, he could supply the links he needed to complete the chain of evidence as to the "game" the doctor was up to.

To put it in Mr. Harway's own thoughts to himself there was "a woman in it somewhere," but who the woman was, and just "where" she came in were points he intended to discover before he again visited the doctor. For this purpose he followed his intended victim home, and, having watched through the blinds and seen him seated at the supper table, retired to satisfy the cravings of his own inner nature, he being very forcibly reminded that he had had no breakfast or dinner, and that all the support he had received that day had been derived from the doubtful source of the

black pipe, and an equally black bottle without which he never travelled.

But Mr. Harway did not desert his post long ; having fortified himself with some bread and meat at the nearest restaurant, and replenished the black bottle, he returned to Beaver Hall Hill and took up his position opposite Doctor Griffith's office.

The doctor did not enjoy his supper. The scene with his wife had not tended to improve his appetite, and he soon rose from the table to return to his office. As he was leaving the room the servant girl handed him a small envelope which had been left for him during the day. On reaching his office he opened it and read the few lines traced on the scented note-paper enclosed.

This is what the note contained :

“ I have not seen you for a week. Why don't you call ? ANNIE.”

He read the lines several times, and pondered over them for a few minutes. In the humor he was then in it needed only some trifling incident to decide him as to the desperate step he had been contemplating for the past week.

“ Annie Howson, and one hundred thousand dollars.” That was the thought which filled his mind ; and, terrible as was the course he was steeling himself to pursue in order to attain his object, he had made up his mind to follow his evil inclination, ere he rose from his chair and donned his overcoat and hat to call on Miss Howson.

Mr. Harway, peeping through the blinds wondered at the stern, hard expression which gradually crept over the doctor's face as he sat and thought over the details of his cruel design ; but Mr. Harway, bad as he was, would have shuddered if he could have read the thoughts which were passing through the man's mind. “ Annie Howson, and one hundred thousand dollars.” The words seemed to have photographed themselves on his mind, and he thought them over again and again as he lowered the gas, and passed out into the street.

Mr. Harway slunk after him in the darkness and followed him until he reached Mr. Howson's residence in Sherbrooke street. He watched until the doctor had entered, and then approaching the door he read the name, very plainly marked on the imposing brass plate,

“ James Howson.”

Amongst the various scraps of knowledge which Mr. Harway had found very frequently useful to him was an acquaintance

with the names of the richest men in any city where he may happen to temporarily reside, and when he read the name "James Howson" he recognised it as that of one of the "merchant princes" of Montreal, and he rubbed his hands pleasantly together in a satisfied sort of manner.

"I'm blessed," he muttered softly, "if I don't see his game now. "It's a big fish you're angling for, Doc.', but I hope you'll land it and I'll come in for my share of the spoils. I'm a perfect gentleman, and I do like to earn an honest living without having to work for it.

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#### SCENE IV.

##### MISS HOWSON MAKES A CONQUEST.

MISS Annie Howson sat alone in her parlor, anxiously expecting a visit from the doctor, and when she heard the door bell ring, she, imagining who it was, opened it herself in preference to waiting for the servant.

"What a naughty man you are, not to have called on me for so long a time," she said when they were seated together in the parlor.

"How could I be sure you wanted to see me?" He asked the question in the tone of a man who felt confident he could receive but one answer.

"You may be certain I am always pleased to see *you*."

She looked down for a moment, and blushed slightly; and the doctor, emboldened, drew up nearer to her.

"You almost encourage me to tell a secret," he said, "You are so kind. May I?"

"I suppose so," she answered, half affecting not to understand him. "Women are always fond of secrets."

"Mine is a very important one to me."

"I hope it is nothing wicked!" she said looking up to him with a soft gentle light in her eyes, which said very clearly that she did not think he could in any way be connected with a wicked secret.

Hard as he was, and passionately as he loved her, he could not repress a slight blush, the question was so pertinent to his thought. But he quickly recovered and even managed to smile as he placed

his arm round her waist and drew her gently towards him, whispering:

“Nothing very wicked, unless it is wicked to love you.”

She made a very slight movement as if to draw away from him, but he pressed her a little closer and took her hand, which remained passive and unresisting in his, as he continued:

“Yes, Annie, I love you tenderly, devotedly, sincerely, with all the strength and passion of my nature. I have loved you from the moment I first beheld you, but feared to speak, dreading you might think me too presumptuous. But I can resist no longer, I must know my fate to-night. Tell me, can you care a little for me?”

He drew her still closer to him and pressed the hand she did not withdraw, and her head dropped gradually towards him until it rested on his shoulder.

This was exactly the kind of love-making Miss Howson liked. She could not have believed any man loved her if he stood calmly before her and told her so. She did not exactly care that he should drop on his knees, but that arm around her felt very comforting, it suggested protection and all that sort of thing, and the occasional pressure of her hand was very pleasant.

She had had many flirtations and several proposals before, but none which came so nearly up to her idea of how a man should tell a girl he loved her. The words he used certainly did sound very much like dozens of similar speeches she had read in the cheap literature she was so fond of, but what of that, they were so sweetly uttered.

Until now she had only thought she loved the Doctor, now she felt *sure* of it, and a slight sigh of pleasure escaped her as she allowed him to draw her still a little closer to him.

“Look up at me, darling, and let me read in your eyes, whether there is any hope for me.”

She raised her head for an instant and looked at him with happy tears standing in her lustrous eyes. Ere she could replace her head upon his shoulder, he drew her blushing face towards him and kissed her,

“And you will be my wife?”

She did not answer in words, but her eyes replied for her, and as he drew her to him again and pressed her unresisting lips, he felt that he had almost accomplished his object. “Annie Howson and one hundred thousand dollars.”

Yet at that moment there arose before him the remembrance of another woman he had once loved as passionately, and he involuntarily shuddered as he thought of the terrible means he had decided on for extricating himself from the dangerous position in which he was placed.

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“Harry,” said Miss Howson, and she flushed up a little as she used the word, for it was the first time she had addressed him by his christian name, “Harry, I’m afraid you will have trouble with papa in getting his consent.”

“Do you think so?”

For the first time the possibility of a refusal from Mr. Howson occurred to him. His acquaintance with that gentleman was very slight, and not particularly cordial, and it now seemed to him very likely that he would refuse to give his daughter’s hand to a man of whose past life he knew nothing, and with whom he had been acquainted for less than a year.

“I will try to persuade him to give you to me, nevertheless, little one, and I think I shall succeed.”

“I hope you will,” she replied; “but if he don’t, what can we do?”

“Do without it!”

“What! Harry, you surely would not want to marry me without papa’s consent.”

“Of course I would much rather have it than not, but, if he won’t give it, what else can we do? I want to marry you, darling, not your father, and I mean to do it at all hazards.”

He meant it too, and no one but himself knew the full meanings of those two words, “all hazards.” He fully recognised the risk he ran in marrying again while his wife lived; but would she live? Only he and his God knew what he had determined on that point.

He could not possibly have pleased Miss Howson more than by telling her he meant to marry her at all hazards. It had a smack of the “going through fire and water” about it which so much delighted her in literature, and which she had always fondly hoped to experience in real life. She was fully prepared to run away with him that night, and would probably have consented had he proposed it. But he did not propose it; his next question had something more of the prosaic about it.

"Annie, don't you think it would, perhaps, be better if we kept our engagement secret for a week or two, and, in the meanwhile, I can get to know your father better, and possibly he may learn to like me, and so not refuse his consent when I ask for you?"

And then arose before Miss Howson's vision another scene. A grand marriage at the Cathedral; splendid wedding presents; half-a-dozen bridesmaids; a champagne breakfast; the congratulations of friends, the envy of rivals; a paragraph in the papers, and a wedding tour.

Yes, take it all together, Miss Howson thought she preferred the realistic to the romantic side of the picture; and, although she was fully determined to get married without her father's consent, if necessary, she thought it would probably be better to obtain the paternal blessing, if possible, and, therefore, she said, after a slight pause:

"Perhaps you are right, Harry, it would be better to gain papa's consent; and, if *you* desire it, our engagement can remain a secret for the present; but not for long, Harry dear, I am so anxious to show you to the world as my affianced husband."

She allowed him to kiss her again, and I am not very certain but what she kissed him in return, for there was a pause of several seconds, and the sound of labial salutations several times repeated before he spoke again.

"I think two weeks will be sufficient, darling; if I cannot gain his consent in that time, I may well despair of ever doing so."

"Perhaps I can help you, Harry."

"Certainly, darling, I expect you to assist me all you can."

"But I don't mean by myself, Harry, I mean through some one else, some one papa has a very high opinion of, and in whose judgment he places great confidence."

Her manner was not very confident, and she seemed rather doubtful as to the manner in which he would receive her answer to the question; he immediately asked her.

"Who, Miss Moxton?"

"No; some one on whose opinion papa places more dependence than he does on auntie's."

"Who?"

"Charlie Morton."

"Charlie Morton?"

"Yes; he told me he had known you from boyhood; that you

were at school together, and if he will only help us I know papa will consent ; he will almost always follow Charlie—Mr. Morton's—advice, and Charlie—Mr. Morton—will do anything I ask him."

He thought over this for some time. The idea that the brother of his wife should use his influence to gain him the hand of another while that wife lived was something which staggered him for a moment ; and the multitude of thoughts which crowded into his mind as to his own designs with regard to that wife pressed on his brain so strongly that he remained silent for several minutes, and scarcely heard Annie's question :

" Well, what do you say ? Don't you think we had better get Mr. Morton to help us ! "

" No," he exclaimed half starting from his seat, " I will owe nothing to Charlie Morton ; I will win you or lose, by my own exertions. I might lose you, but I intend to try hard to win you, and when I try I am hard to beat."

## ACT III.—DEAD.

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### SCENE I.

#### MR. FARRON FINDS A SUBJECT.

AUGUST twenty-ninth ; time, six o'clock in the evening ; place, Mrs. Grub's boarding-house in St. Urbain Street.

Mr. Frank Farron and his friend Mr. Gus Fowler occupied, jointly, a medium-sized room on the second floor of a boarding-house in St. Urbain Street. The room was furnished, like most second-class boarding-houses, with a good deal of nothing and very little of anything. The most prominent feature in it was a huge stove which stood in one corner and occupied a very fair portion of the rather limited space, and which alternately kept the room too warm or too cold, owing to its having a weakness for suddenly blazing up very hot and then burning rapidly out. The landlady said it was the fault of the draught, but Mr. Fowler stoutly maintained that it was due to the plentiful scarcity of coal. This stove was never taken down but stood solemnly in its corner winter and summer.

The remaining furniture consisted of two chairs, a washstand with a cracked basin and a mug minus the handle, a couple of trunks, a small table, and a bed which Fowler declared would soon prove too small if Farron continued to get stout in the way he was doing. The carpet was old, faded, and torn, and frequent patches bore evidence of the thriftness of its owner. The walls were covered with dingy paper, which showed all its blackened ugliness when the young men took possession of the room ; but Mr. Fowler soon remedied that defect by hanging on it half-a-dozen sporting pictures of impossible horses running without taking the trouble to touch the ground, and by suspending a pair of monster snow-shoes, which neither he nor his companion could wear.

Messrs. Farren and Fowler were medical students attending

Victoria College; and, although their lodging was not very sumptuous, they found it convenient on account of its propinquity to the dissecting-room.

On the evening in question both gentlemen were at home. Mr. Farron was seated at the table reading, and assisting his studies by constant application to a briar pipe, and occasional sips of something which was in a glass at his elbow, and which looked considerably darker than water. From time to time he would remove the pipe from his lips, make a fresh addition to the new pattern he was gradually producing on the carpet, consult the glass, replace his pipe and continue his reading.

Mr. Fowler was sitting by the stove with his feet resting on it, and his chair tipped slightly back. He was also armed with a briar pipe and a glass with something in it, but he was not ornamenting the carpet for the simple reason that he found it easier to open the stove door and convert that article into a gigantic spittoon.

“Silence reigned supreme” for about half an hour, when Fowler, having finished the contents of both the glass and the pipe, removed his feet from the stove and turned towards his companion :

“Say, Frank, what on earth are you studying so intently? I should think you had had enough of it by this time at any rate.”

Mr. Farron looked up from his book, and, after an attack on the glass, which completely emptied it, replied :

“I’ve been studying a magnificent case, Gus—an amputation of the thigh just at the hip-bone; I never read a more interesting case.”

“Oh hang it! don’t talk shop. I thought you were reading a novel, or I would have spoken to you long ago. What is the good of bothering about hip-bones and such things until term commences.”

“Well, term will commence in a week, and I thought I would polish up a bit; I’ve got awfully rusty during the summer vacation. Just read this description of the operation,” he continued, offering Mr. Fowler the book.

“No, thank you, I don’t care about hip-bones, especially after supper.”

“I wish I could get a subject,” half soliloquised Mr. Farron; “I should like to try that operation; it must be very interesting.”

“If all you want is a subject, I suppose there are plenty in the cellar at the college.”

"No. I've been there, and there is nothing very good. I should like to get a fresh one."

"I wish," said Mr. Fowler, half soliloquising, "that old mother Grub could find it convenient to die just now; if it's bones you want, she would supply little else, and if she proved only half as tough as the whit-leather she provides for us and honors with the name of beefsteak, it would be fun to see you trying to cut her up. But, no," he continued, sadly shaking his head, "there is no such luck; she is one of the sort that never die; she will gradually dry up, and some fine morning, when there is a stiff breeze, she will blow away like a chip, beefsteak and all. May the day not be far distant!" He shook his head again, put something out of a black bottle into his glass, added a little—very little—water from the mug without a handle, took a sip with an air of satisfaction, lighted his pipe, and resumed his seat by the stove.

"Never mind your chaff now, Gus," said Mr. Farron, "old mother Grub won't die to please you, and I must look elsewhere for a subject."

"Then why don't you——" began Mr. Fowler, but ere he could complete the sentence he was interrupted by a knock at the door, and the head of a servant-girl quickly following the knock, she announced:

"There's a man below wants to see you, Mr. Farron."

"Tell the man to come up."

The head was withdrawn and the two occupants of the room smoked on in silence until the door opened again and "the man" entered the room.

He was a middle-aged man of rather unprepossessing appearance, dressed in a short coat and well worn dark pants, which were rolled up at the bottoms as if constantly expecting a tramp through the mud.

"Good hevening, gents both," said the man, pulling off his hat and making a scrape with his foot, "I 'opes I sees you well."

"Ah! Boggs, come in," said Mr. Farron, "called about that little bill, I suppose?"

"That's hit," replied Mr. Boggs promptly, taking one step into the room, and planting himself where the door-mat ought to have been but wasn't, for the reason that there was no door-mat. "You told me to call, yer oner, hand has I ham not driving this week, hi thought a few hextra stamps would 'elp to keep 'ouse. No hof fence hintended, gents both."

"All right, Boggs, how much is it?" asked Mr. Farron with the proud confidence of a man who is prepared to cancel liabilities to any amount.

"Two dollars hand a 'alf, sir."

"Got change for a five?"

"Yes, yer oner," replied Mr. Boggs, apparently slightly surprised at finding so prompt a response to his demand from a quarter where he had expected an excuse. But Mr. Boggs' surprise changed to absolute astonishment when Mr. Farron drew from his pocket-book a considerable roll of fives and tens, and selecting a five, handed it to him.

"Hall right, yer 'oner; 'ere's the change, with my hearty thanks, gents both."

"Take something, Boggs?" inquired Mr. Fowler, holding out the black bottle in one hand and a glass in the other.

"Thank'ee, sir, hi don't mind hif hi do."

He about half-filled the glass, made a sort of general sweep with his hand and saying, "'Ere's your good 'ealths, gents both," gently tipped the glass and continued tilting until it was completely empty. He could not be said to have exactly "drunk" the liquor, he simply let it run down his throat; when it was down he smacked his lips in a satisfied manner, wiped them with the sleeve of his coat, and smiled pleasantly.

"Hi shall be hon the stand again next week, gents both," he said, "hand shall allers be happy to serve you hin any way."

Farron and Fowler exchanged an expressive wink, and Mr. Boggs brushed his hat with his sleeve preparatory to taking his leave.

"Wait a minute, Boggs," said Farron. "Have you done anything in the way of carrying dead freight lately?"

"No, sir, hi haint done nothink hin that line lately, hand hi'm a'most afraid to try: The police makes themselves too busy with a poor man's business, hand hif hi was caught hit would be the death of the hold woman, she's that pertickler, gents both. There haint a better woman nowhere than the hold woman," he continued, warming with his subject, "honly she won't be 'appy; 'taint no use doing nothink fur her, she won't be 'appy; she's got a'most heverythink ha woman can want; she's ha 'ouse hand ha 'ome, hand ha 'orse, hand ha 'usband with a 'appy 'art, but she will worrit and worrit herself hand won't be 'appy, hand hif hi

was took hat the game you referred to, gents both, hit would worrit the hold woman to death."

Mr. Fowler made no direct reply to this speech, in fact he could scarcely be said to have replied to it at all, for he simply remarked, "Take another!" at the same time producing the black bottle.

Mr. Boggs evidently believed with Shakespeare that "brevity is the soul of wit," for he replied with the one word "Thanks," and took it.

"Now, Boggs," said Mr. Farron, "let's to business. I want a good fresh subject; can't you get one and take it to the College? You know it will be all right."

"Hi'd rather not, gents both, but hif it was made well worth my while, hi might keep my heye hopen, hand maybe hi might see somethink."

"You need not be afraid of the pay; you know that is all right."

"His hit the hold price, gents both; hit's very little for the risk, hand bodies his hup."

"Yes, I have no doubt they are 'up' when you get hold of them," said Mr. Farron; "but, come now, I know you have managed many a quiet job before; get me a good subject inside of ten days and I don't mind giving you a trifle myself besides what the College pays."

Mr. Boggs paused for a moment, scratched his head, and then remarked:

"His hit ha man hor a woman; hor does it make no difference?"

"A woman would be best," said Mr. Farron promptly.

"Hi'm sorry for that. Hi hallers feels squeemish habout women; hi don't care so much habout men, but women his different; hit hallers makes me think hof my hold woman."

"Don't let your feelings get the best of you, Boggs," said Mr. Farron. "You can make a good thing out of this if you like, and without any risk; why, bless me, how often is it you hear anything of body-snatching, and yet you know very well, Boggs, it's done oftener than most people suspect."

"Hi knows it, gents both, hi knows it. Did you say han hextra five hif it was a good one?"

"I did not say five, but, perhaps, it might be that."

"Well, hi'll do my best, gents both, hand hif hi succeeds you'll

'ear hof hit hinside hof ha week." After firing off which volley of h's Mr. Boggs bowed himself out of the room, and the students prepared themselves for an evening stroll.

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## SCENE II.

## MR. MORTON FINDS HIMSELF MISTAKEN.

TIME, September fifth, eighteen hundred and seventy; place, Mr. Howson's residence in Sherbrooke street.

Mr. Morton had not been able to carry out his intention with reference to Miss Howson during the past two weeks, for the reason that he had never been so fortunate as to find her alone. On the occasion of all his late visits he had been forced, somewhat unwillingly, to endure the company of either Mr. Johnson or Dr. Griffith, and sometimes of both.

I am afraid these trials did not sweeten Mr. Morton's temper, and he fervently wished both the doctor and Mr. Johnson could be transported to some remote portion of the earth, there to remain until he should desire their recall; he thought it very probable they would remain there some time.

The three or four visits during which he had encountered his two rivals, for so he felt them to be, had served to confirm him in his determination to ask Miss Howson to be his wife. She had been kinder to him on his last visit than she had been for some time past, and Mr. Morton flattered himself there was a touch of tenderness in her tone when she asked him to "call again soon." He determined to take advantage of the invitation, and so, on the evening of this fifth day of September, although it was only three nights since he had seen her, he called again.

Fate was not any kinder to him on this occasion than on former ones, for on entering the parlor he found Dr. Griffith already there; however, this time he was the last caller, and he determined to quietly sit the doctor out.

The meeting between the two men was polite, but not very cordial. Charlie Morton had never quite got over his boyish distrust of Harry Griffith; he treated him as an old acquaintance and school-fellow, and to the outward eye they were great friends; but there was no bond of sympathy between them, and they never grew to be more than intimate acquaintances and nothing more.

There is a much broader gap between the meaning of an "intimate acquaintance" and "a friend" than most people suppose. One is a person whom we meet frequently, are always on pleasant terms with, trust, perhaps, to a small degree with some of our little secrets which are not very important; but we cannot place implicit confidence in him; we cannot open our secret soul to him, go to him for advice or comfort in the hour of need, place our whole trust in in the hour of danger. Although our tastes may assimilate, our pursuits be almost the same, our intercourse constant and intimate, yet we never get beyond that imperceptible barrier which divides acquaintanceship, however intimate, from true friendship. The other is one whom we can trust fully and entirely, in whom we repose our whole confidence, and lay bare our most secret thoughts to, certain that we shall get an honest expression of opinion, well and kindly meant; it may not always be pleasant—a true friend's advice is frequently the reverse, for he will tell us our faults, which an acquaintance won't,—but there is a bond of sympathy between us which makes the most unpleasant pills go down, because we know they are intended for our good. Two such friends may have the ocean roll between them, but it will not wash away the bond that links them together; they may not see each other's faces for years, but the old kind feeling will remain; their tastes, interests, pursuits may differ, but that very difference frequently only serves to strengthen the bond; there is something more than mere companionship between them—they are friends; they can have trust and confidence in each other, and neither time nor distance will change the feeling. There is nothing like absence, or danger, or difficulties to test friendship; many persons walk through life apparently surrounded by friends, and yet when the time of trial comes it is found that they are simply intimate acquaintances, nothing more. And so with marriage; many and many a couple go through life to the grave, and never get beyond the stage of intimate acquaintanceship; they have a transient passion for each other, which they think is love, that wears off; there is no bond of sympathy between them, and they drift into intimate acquaintanceship, and never rise to the height of friendship. Husband and wife, of all people in the world, should be friends,—close, intimate, bosom friends,—and when they are not there is always danger of their union being an unhappy one; they may drift through life together without any serious mishap, but they are very apt to run aground on the first sandbank they meet.

Charlie Morton and Harry Griffith, from early associations, from circumstances and from habit, had reached the stage of intimate acquaintanceship, but they were destined never to pass it.

The evening at Mr. Howson's was not a very brilliant one. Mr. Howson "looked in" for a little while, and the doctor engaged him in a lively discussion about the war and other current topics, but Mr. Howson did not seem to relish it very much, and after half-an-hour's conversation, in which the doctor did nearly all the talking, he went off to his club, consoling himself with the reflection that Charlie's presence would have a neutralizing effect on the doctor's fascinations, and that he would not be able to attack Miss Annie's heart—which he strongly suspected he was doing—too severely that night.

Mr. Howson was an easy-going, quiet man, who was quite content to let things take their natural course, so long as that course was not highly improper; he was a man of very even temperament, but of strong will, and, when once he made up his mind on any subject, he was, to use a vulgarism, "as obstinate as a mule." He knew Miss Annie's weakness for flirting, but it gave him little uneasiness; he consoled himself by saying "all women have a certain amount of devilment in them, and it is just as well if it comes out while they are young, they will make better wives and mothers for it by and by." So he troubled himself but very little about Miss Annie's suitors, thinking that ere long she would get tired of having half-a-dozen strings to her bow, and be content to settle down into staid matrimony. On that point Mr. Howson had made up his mind, and it would take a great deal to cause him to change it.

After his departure matters did not improve very much in the parlor. "The neutralizing" process was strongly at work, and although everything went smoothly on the surface, each gentleman heartily wished the other at the bottom of the sea. As for Miss Howson, she would have preferred a *tête-à-tête* with her betrothed, but she also desired to have a quiet talk with Charlie Morton, for she had determined to solicit his assistance in gaining her father's consent to her engagement; she felt, therefore, very much like Captain Macheath in the *Beggars' Opera*:

" How happy I could be with either,  
Were 'tother dear charmer away."

There was some singing and playing and a good deal of conversation about nothing, but it was hard work to each of the three

to talk, and what was said was neither very brilliant nor very new.

At last the little ormolu clock on the mantelpiece chimed out half-past ten, and the doctor, finding Morton was determined to sit him out, rose to go.

Miss Howson accompanied him to the door, and it seemed to Mr. Morton, who sat idly running his fingers over the keys of the piano, that it took much longer to say good-night than either necessity or politeness required; at last, however, she returned, with rather a heightened color, and seating herself at some little distance from the piano, said:

“Sing something for me, Charlie; you only sang once to-night.”

“I don’t feel like singing, Annie,” he answered, changing his seat to one a little nearer to her. “I have something very serious to say to you.”

“Something serious to say to me?” she asked in surprise, rising and facing him, “that is a strange coincidence, for I have something serious to say to you.”

He did not notice the interruption, but went on:

“I want to ask you a very serious question, one which will have a very great influence on both our future lives.”

“Oh, don’t, Charlie, please don’t,” she said, sinking back in her chair, and looking at him half in wonder, half in sorrow.

She knew he was going to propose to her, she could tell that; but it seemed so strange that he could sit there so calmly with his elbows resting on his knees and the tips of his fingers joined together, and make a formal proposal for her hand. A few days ago she would have laughed at him, but now she wanted his help and assistance, and she grew half frightened as she thought that if she rejected him—as, of course, she must—he might use his influence with her father against her, and so increase the difficulty of gaining his consent to her engagement.

“It is a question,” continued Mr. Morton calmly, although his voice quivered a little with suppressed emotion, “which I have for some time thought of putting to you, only I had not quite made up my mind whether it was best to do it or not; now I have made up my mind; Annie, the question is—will you be my wife?”

She buried her face in her hands, which were clasped on the back of the chair, and half moaned, “Oh, Charlie, please don’t.”

He rose and crossed over to her, and laid his hand on her shoulder.

"I know I am considerably older than you are, Annie; indeed I feel almost like an old man when I remember that I used to know you when you were in short frocks, it seems so long ago, but you know the old adage, 'better be an old man's darling than a young man's slave.' I love you, Annie, as truly as man can love woman; I learned to love you when you were a little girl at school, and my love has gone on growing without my knowing it, until I feel as if it would be impossible for me to live without you. You used to love me when you were a little girl, Annie; tell me, has all that love departed with the short frocks, or is there a little bit left yet? Look up at me," he continued, placing his hand on her head and smoothing her hair, "look up at me and tell me if you still love me as you used to."

"I still love you, Charlie, as I used to when I was a little girl, as if you were my big brother; nothing more."

"And that is enough for the present; give me leave to try to teach you to love me better; I think I can succeed."

"No, no, Charlie, it can never be. I cannot be your wife."

"Why?"

"Because—because I have promised to marry some one else."

"Engaged!"

He removed his hand from her head and returned to his seat, where he sat with his head leaning on one hand, thoroughly overcome by the suddenness of the blow. He knew Annie had been flirting with Johnson and Dr. Griffith both, as she had done with half-a-dozen others, but he did not think matters had gone so far as this. And with the knowledge that she was pledged to another, came also the knowledge that he loved her more truly, more deeply, and more devotedly than he had ever dreamed of. He sat stunned, and the hot tears almost started to his eyes.

"Oh, Charlie, I'm so sorry," said a soft voice beside him, half broken by a sob, and a little hand, white and plump, was laid on his shoulder, "I'm so sorry you should have taken it in your head to want to marry me, at least just at this time when I am in such trouble, and want your help so much, and now I can't ask it."

"In trouble, Annie; trouble that I can help you out of? Tell me what it is, child; you know I never refused you anything you asked me."

She pushed a low stool towards him and sat on it, resting her arm on his knee and looking up at him.

" You're so good, Charlie, and I'm so sorry for your disappointment, but I couldn't help it, you know, could I ? "

" I suppose not, child ; I've been a fool, that's all ; but what is it you want me to do ? "

" I want you to tell papa, and make him give his consent to my engagement."

It was very hard for him to promise that ; it was hard enough to know that the girl he loved was engaged to another, but it was harder still to think that he should have to lend his assistance to enable that other to win her. Still he loved her so well that he cared only for her happiness, and as she sat at his feet time seemed to roll back, and she was again a little girl pleading to him to intercede with her father for some favor she wished to have granted. It was hard to see her another's, but, if it was for her happiness, he was content.

" Are you sure you love this man, Annie ? " he asked after a pause, " are you sure that you will be happy with him ? "

" I never could be happy without him."

" Who is he ? "

" Dr. Griffith."

Somehow he had felt from the moment she told him of her engagement that Griffith was the man, yet, now that she called him by name he felt a strong and sudden aversion to the man, and he could not promise to use his influence with her father to gain his consent.

" I'm afraid papa don't like Harry," she continued, " but you were at school with him, and have known him all his life nearly ; you can tell papa how good he is, won't you, Charlie ? "

He paused for a few seconds, unwilling to refuse, and still more unwilling to consent. At last he said :

" I cannot promise to-night, Annie ; you are mistaken as to my knowing all about Harry Griffith's life ; the ten most important years of his life are almost a blank to me. I will find out all I can about them, and then—perhaps—I—Oh, Annie," he exclaimed passionately, his love and grief breaking down his usually calm, quiet manner, " you don't know what you ask me to do when you ask me to help your marriage with another man. I never felt until this moment how much I love you and how hard and bitter it is to give you up ; but I love you too well, child, to let my hap-

piness stand in the way of yours ; if you think you can be happier with this man than with me, I can only say, 'God grant it may be so,' but don't ask me to assist in accomplishing your marriage, at least not yet; give me a few days to think about it, then I will see you again ; and now, good-night."

He raised her head from his knee, where she was rapidly changing the pattern of his pantaloons with her tears, and, drawing her to him, pressed his lips lightly on her forehead, and before she had time to say anything he had left the room.

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### SCENE III.

#### DR. GRIFFITH FINDS HIMSELF FREE.

TIME, September seventh, eighteen hundred and seventy; place, Griffith's residence in Longueuil.

Mrs. Griffith did not carry out her determination to remove to Montreal, for the reason that on the day after her interview with her husband, she found herself so ill as to be scarcely able to leave her room, and for over a week she was compelled to keep in the house.

Dr. Griffith was very attentive to her during this time, visiting her almost daily and striving hard to show a love for her which he did not feel. He did not attend her professionally himself, he called himself "Mr." Griffith in Longueuil and dropped the "Doctor"—but called in the aid of a village practitioner who pronounced Mrs. Griffith very weak, and advised her to keep very quiet for a few days.

On the sixth the baby was born ; a poor weak little girl with scarce strength enough in it to breathe the fresh air of heaven. Dr. Griffith was with Mamie at the time and remained with her that night and the following day and night. She was very ill ; the village doctor gave but little hope of her recovery, and the disconsolate husband appeared greatly afflicted ; but there was a demon of joy dancing in his heart, and he could have thanked God for saving him from a crime, only he had forgotten how to thank God years ago.

All that day of the seventh he watched by her, apparently with the deepest solicitude, but really he was watching her with a cat-like stealthiness, dreading to see any signs of improvement. She

was very feeble and could scarcely speak, but it seemed to give her great pleasure to have her husband with her; she expected to die, and told him so, committing her two children to his care and praying him to fill, as nearly as possible, her place to them; he tried to comfort her, and even attempted to laugh away her fears, but there was no heartiness in his voice, and only the blindest love could have thought that he meant the words he said.

But Mamie's love was blind now; in the hour which drew her close to the grave, as she thought, she forgave and forgot all his past neglect, all his coldness, all his unkindness; she could only remember that he was her husband, the father of her children, and that he had loved her once; and, when he whispered "Try to live for me, darling," she believed he felt the words he uttered, that his old love was returning, and she humbly prayed that her life might be spared, and that she might prove a source of joy and comfort to him in the future.

The day of the seventh was murky and overcast, the sun seemed ashamed to shine out boldly, and only showed his face occasionally for a few minutes; it rained fitfully, and the wind sighed mournfully through the trees surrounding the cottage; altogether it was a very disagreeable day, and one calculated to depress the spirits. Dr. Griffith was fully conscious of its enervating influence, and after supper he went for a short walk to try and drive away the feeling of depression which was fast stealing over him. He felt "out of sorts" and tried air and exercise to invigorate him.

Mamie was asleep when he returned, but the nurse told him that the village doctor had called during his absence and given her a sleeping draught.

"And he says, sir, that she looks a little better, and if she passes a good night there will be no danger," she added, as he turned towards his wife's room.

He stood by the bedside for some minutes, gazing intently at her, but he did not seem to see her, his gaze was fixed far, far beyond in that dim and distant future which we are all trying to read, but whose mysteries we cannot pierce. At last he aroused himself with a start and watched her attentively as she slept, calm and peaceful as a little child. Her breathing was soft and regular and the faintest tinge of color was returning to her cheeks; he carefully took her wrist in his hand and counted the pulse; it was very weak, but it was regular and fast assuming a healthy tone, it

was clear that the fever was abating and Mamie's chances of life were largely increasing.

"Curse her," he muttered, "the doctor is right, she will live, and if she lives what am I to do?"

He returned to the parlor and sat for a while thinking deeply; a basket containing some knitting was lying on the table where Mamie had left it when she was taken ill; mechanically he began playing with the contents, pulling over the work without noticing what he was doing. It was a little jacket she had been knitting for the baby she expected, and the pins had been left sticking in the large ball of scarlet worsted; he pulled one of the pins out and began idly pushing it in and pulling it out of the ball; again and again he stuck it, sometimes with a fierce stab as if he was driving it into an enemy, sometimes with gentle carefulness as if testing the amount of resistance the fluffy substance offered to the blunt point of the instrument; that bright little rod of glittering steel seemed to possess a curious fascination for him, and he sat playing with it until the clock tolled out the hour of midnight. He rose feeling hot and feverish and opened the window to let in the cooling air, but still he held the little piece of steel in his hand, and still the thought was ringing in his ears, "if she lives what am I to do?" He turned from the window and approached his wife's room.

"Half-an-hour will tell now," he said, "If she awakes from this sleep with the fever gone, the doctor will be right and she will live; and if she lives what am I to do?"

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"It is a terrible blow, my dear sir, a very terrible blow, but not quite unexpected; you must endeavour to bear it with fortitude and not give way to your feelings too freely. We must all die, it is natural to die, sir, and we all have to do it at some time or other. The case was a bad one from the commencement, great prostration, never saw a person more thoroughly prostrated in my life; to be sure I did have some hope last night, she seemed to be rallying a little, but it was only momentary, the last struggle, the final flickering up of life before it went out forever. It is sad, sir, very sad to lose so estimable a lady, but we must all die."

It was the village doctor who spoke, and the scene was Mamie's bed-room. How still and solemn it seemed in the early morning light, and how awful in its terrible quiet seemed that rigid figure lying on the bed. So cold, so calm, so still; a slight smile still

hung around the lips where it had been frozen by the icy hand of death ; the eyes were closed, and the face was calm and peaceful ; death must have come without a struggle, and the spirit have winged it way to its Creator without pain. Very peaceful and placid it looked in the grey tints of morning, very happy and contented to die ; but terrible, oh, fearfully terrible to the one who knelt cowering by the bed-side, his face hidden in his hands and convulsive sobs shaking his whole frame ; he was free, he had attained the hope for which he had hoped and plotted ; the one barrier to his union with Annie Howson was removed ; but, as Harry Griffith knelt by that still, placid figure, he would have given up all his schemes, forfeited all his hopes, abandoned all his plans, if he could only have put the life back into that inanimate clay.

It was the reaction after the long strain on his nerves which caused the sudden outburst of feeling, the village doctor had witnessed, more than any strong returning passion for the dead ; for a few minutes he really did feel that he could give up all to restore her to life once more, but it soon passed, and the cold, hard feeling of joy that the one obstacle in his way had been removed, returned, and he rose from his knees without one feeling of pity or sorrow in his heart for the one who had been cut off in the pride of her womanhood.

The baby did not long survive its mother, and, on the day following, mother and child were buried in one grave in the village churchyard. Dr. Griffith attended the funeral and mourned as became a bereaved husband and father, and a few of the villagers with whom Mamie had become acquainted during her brief sojourn amongst them also attended out of respect, and were not surprised at the depth of emotion shown by the new-made widower. Harry Griffith was a good actor, and few could have imagined that his grief was not real and that, under the outward garb of sorrow, there was a devilish joy filling his heart ; all danger was passed now, and he would win "Annie Howson and one hundred thousand dollars."

After the funeral Dr. Griffith had the cottage closed up, discharged the servants with handsome presents for their care of their dead mistress, and took his little girl over to Montreal with him. That afternoon Fan was placed in the Hochelaga Convent, where he had determined to leave her until he made up his mind

as to what her future life was to be, and he returned to his office on Beaver Hall Hill for the first time in four days.

He found two notes awaiting him ; one was from Annie reproaching him for his neglect in not calling on her, and asking him to see her immediately as she had something important to communicate ; the other ran as follows :

MONTREAL, September 9th, 1870.

DEAR Doc,—Having being out of the city on business for the past ten days has prevented my calling on you sooner. You will be glad to hear that I have found the gal—of course you'll be glad, you said so, and as I'm a perfect gentleman myself I always believe what another gentleman says. I've found her for certain —how is that for high, Doc ? She's living over in Longueuil—how is that for low, Doc ? She is visited constantly by a *Mr.* Griffith—how is that for Jack, Doc ? and I'm coming to see you to-morrow evening to get my five hundred dollars—how is that for game, Doc ? Five hundred dollars ain't much considering the stakes you're playing for ; but, I am a perfect gentleman and as that was the sum agreed on, it will do *for the present*. Eight o'clock sharp I'll be with you, until then

I remain,

Yours to command,

JAMES HARWAY.

The letter, was written in a sprawling, irregular, shaky hand, as if the writer was not very much given to correspondence, and his nerves were rather unsteady ; the odor of stale tobacco hung palpably about it, and on one corner was the unmistakable impress of a wet glass, which had probably been placed there to hold the paper steady.

Dr. Griffith smiled in a quiet, satisfied way as he read the note, and then tore it into small pieces and threw them into the empty grate.

“ All right, my dilapidated friend,” thought he, “ you can come as soon as you please now, you are too late, for I am free now and by to-morrow night, if I mistake not, I shall have no cause to care how soon it is known that Mamie Morton was not drowned six years ago, but was buried to-day in Longueuil Cemetery.”

He ate his supper with a good appetite, smoked a cigar with apparent relish, and started about half-past seven to pay a visit to Miss Howson.

## SCENE IV.

### MISS MOXTON FINDS HERSELF DISGUSTED.

Miss Howson was alone when the doctor arrived. Miss Moxton, who amongst other peculiarities had a perfect mania for walking, had gone for a constitutional, accompanied by Julia, who went under protest, and Mr. Howson was in his study looking over some new magazines; the parlor was therefore free to the lovers, and they were nothing loth to enjoy the pleasures of a *tête-à-tête*.

The doctor soon managed to get himself forgiven for his apparent negligence. He pleaded that important business had called him out of town, but forgot to mention what the business was or where it had called him, and Miss Howson was so well pleased to have him with her that she did not press him very closely with questions.

She informed him of what had passed between Charlie Morton and herself, and he bit his lip with vexation as she said that Morton half promised to use his influence with her father to gain his consent to her marriage.

“Annie,” he said, half sternly, “I don’t want Charlie Morton’s interference or assistance; I think I am quite able to manage my own affairs without his help, and I am sorry you spoke to him at all about our engagement.”

“But, Harry, how much longer is our engagement to be kept secret? I want it known as soon as possible; there is no use being engaged unless the other girls know it.”

Dr. Griffith was not in quite so great a hurry to proclaim his engagement as Miss Howson appeared to be. Somehow a thought of that lonely grave in Longueuil would recur to him, and he felt as if he would prefer that a little more time elapsed before he took to himself another wife; yet he did not let Miss Howson fancy that he was not as anxious as herself to proclaim their engagement, so he said:

“I think to-morrow will end our concealment. I have paid more attention to your father of late, and I think I can venture to ask him for you now with a reasonable chance of success. Yes, to-morrow I shall ask him for you, Annie, and if he refuses his consent we must——”

“Do without it,” whispered Miss Howson. “Oh, Harry, I hope

papa won't force me to it, but I'd run away with you to-morrow night, if you asked me."

"Then I do ask you. Promise me that if your father refuses his consent you will elope with me to-morrow night. We can easily arrange the details without exciting any suspicion; the train leaves for Toronto at eight o'clock, you can take a walk with your aunt about half-past seven; it will not be very difficult to induce her to walk in the direction of the depot; I will meet you there, and before she can recover from her surprise we will be far beyond pursuit. I will try hard, darling,"—here he placed his arm around her waist,—“to gain your father's consent; only should he refuse it let us carry out our plan.” Miss Howson's head had gradually drooped toward his shoulder until it finally rested on it; her face was raised to his, and bright, happy tears stood in her eyes:

“I'll go with you, Harry, anywhere you ask me,” she threw one arm around his neck and held her lips up to be kissed.

Of course he kissed them; they were warm, sweet, kissable lips, and it would have needed the soul of an anchorite to resist the temptation; there was no show of resistance, and he kissed her again and again, getting more and more determined to win her with or without her father's consent.

“Well, I'm disgusted,” exclaimed a hard, cold, clear voice, and the astonished pair saw the rigid figure of Miss Moxton standing before them. “Annie, I'm ashamed of you, as for you, sir, it's a shame, a perfect shame,” and the flexible nose went up and the angular figure drew itself more pointedly together.

The fact was that Miss Moxton's pedestrian predilections had not been thoroughly gratified, and she had been forced to return home somewhat summarily; Miss Julia had obstinately refused to walk the many miles Miss Moxton had proposed to travel, and had resolutely set her face towards home; this placed Miss Moxton in a dilemma; propriety forbade that Julia should walk home alone; propriety also forbade that Miss Moxton should continue her walk unattended, and while propriety was thinking the matter over, Julia was obstinately walking towards home; it did not take Miss Moxton long to discover that she had the worst of the position, and to induce her to accompany Julia, and so it chanced that returning long before she was expected, and entering without any noise, Miss Moxton found Miss Howson in her lover's arms.

“I assure you, Miss Moxton,” said Dr. Griffith, starting up; “I assure you that——”

"Never mind your assurance, sir," replied Miss Moxton, in her most severe and acid tones, and with an extra upturn of the flexible nose. "I see you have assurance enough and to spare; but I think it is only proper that Mr. Howson should be informed as to the terms of intimacy his daughter is on with a stranger."

Miss Moxton turned to leave the room, but Miss Howson sprang to the door before her and stopped her exit.

"Don't say anything to father to-night, auntie," she said, "Harry intends to tell him of our engagement to-morrow."

Miss Moxton made no reply, but with a scornful elevation of the nose succeeded in opening the door and securing her retreat.

Her absence was a very brief one, for she quickly returned accompanied by Mr. Howson.

"My sister-in-law has given me some very unpleasant information; may I ask to have a few minutes conversation with you in the library." He bowed to Dr. Griffith and motioned him toward the door. The doctor did as requested, but paused for a moment to look at Miss Howson who was weeping on the sofa, and at Miss Moxton who was standing rigid in the centre of the room. As he opened the door the latter lady gave a vigorous toss of her head and said :

"I'm perfectly disgusted."

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Mr. Howson's interview with Dr. Griffith was very short, and eminently unsatisfactory to that gentleman; in very plain and concise terms he refused his consent to his marriage with Annie, and desired that the engagement should be considered as broken. He politely, but firmly, refused to listen to any explanation from the doctor, and finally bowed that gentleman out before he had time to fully recover from his astonishment. The doctor returned to the parlor to get his hat and coat, and contrived to whisper to Miss Howson as he passed her :

"Remember, to-morrow night."

She answered with an inclination of her head, but so slight that neither of the two other occupants of the room noticed it. The doctor then bowed with rather excessive politeness to Miss Moxton, who only elevated her nose, and left the house.

Mr. Howson returned to the parlor and spoke to Miss Annie who was still lying on the sofa crying. He was not harsh with her, but very firm; in almost the same words he had used to Dr. Griffith he told her that he would not consent to her engagement.

"I know very little about the man," he said, "and nothing to his advantage; he seems to be an adventurer who is probably trying to marry you for the sake of the fortune he fancies he will get with you. I am sorry I did not undeceive him on that point, for you may as well understand that if you marry without my consent, you do so on your own responsibility, and not one cent of my fortune do you get. You will very seriously displease me if you have any further communication with this man; you have known him but a short while, and I do not think your feelings can be very deeply interested. I should like to see you married, but to some good man whom I know would take good care of you, not to some adventurer whose very name might not belong to him for all we know."

Mr. Howson seldom indulged in so long a speech, and his daughter knew him well enough to feel assured that it would be useless to remonstrate with him; he had "made up his mind," and when he had done that it was a very difficult thing to induce him to change it; perhaps, with Charlie Morton's help she might succeed, but if that failed she was fully determined to elope with the doctor. She had inherited some of her father's obstinacy, and her mind was as firmly made up to marry the doctor as his was to prevent her.

She said nothing, but before she went to bed that night she penned the following note which was delivered to Dr. Griffith next morning:

"DEAR HARRY,

"Father continues to refuse his consent. We will do without it. I will meet you at the depot at seven this evening; we can be married before we leave the city, can't we? It would be better I think.

"ANNIE.

## ACT IV.—ON THE TRACK.

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### SCENE I.

MR. HARWAY GETS KICKED OUT.

TIME, September tenth, eighteen hundred and seventy; place, Dr. Griffith's office on Beaver Hall Hill.

That amiably-disposed gentleman, Mr. Harway, had not allowed so long a time to elapse before calling on Dr. Griffith without having good reasons for so doing. He had watched the house at Longueuil for two or three days, and had formed an acquaintance with the smart little servant girl from whom he soon gained all the information it was in her power to give. From her he learned that Mrs. Griffith had resided in New York for some years with her husband; and, as he was determined to present as strong a case as possible to the doctor, he repaired to New York for the purpose of gathering, if he could, full particulars of the marriage, to settle, if practicable, the doubt which had arisen in his mind as to whether the lady who was called Mrs. Griffith in Longueuil was really Mamie Morton, or some one who bore the title "Mrs." only by courtesy.

It puzzled him rather to think that the doctor should contemplate so serious a crime as bigamy with the evidence of his guilt so conveniently at hand; and he feared that after all he might be mistaken, and that the doctor may have told the truth when he said Mamie was dead, and that the lady at Longueuil may not have any claims on him which would prevent his marriage with Miss Howson; he, therefore, determined to gather all the facts possible relating to the case before making his demand on the doctor for the promised five hundred dollars.

His visit to New York had proved entirely successful, although it had taken him longer than he had anticipated. His sister had left the city and Bowles had gone on a voyage, as he discovered from the owners of the ship in which he was mate. After some time Mr. Harway succeeded in finding Mrs. Bowles, who was re-

siding at Yonkers, and from her he learned where and when Mamie Morton had been married to Harry Griffith, and without much difficulty obtained a copy of the certificate of marriage; he also found out that the lady in Longueuil was undoubtedly the same who was saved from the wreck of the *Gazelle*, and married in New York six years ago, for Mrs. Bowles had seen her often, the last time only a few days before her departure for Montreal where she said she was going to meet her husband.

Mr. Harway did not enlighten his sister as to his reasons for being so inquisitive about Mrs. Griffith's affairs, but fully satisfied with the information he had gained, he returned to Montreal and wrote the letter we have already seen to Dr. Griffith. He had no fear that Mrs. Griffith would be taken away from Longueuil, for the smart little servant girl had informed him of the expected baby, and somehow it never occurred to him for a moment that she might die; it was, therefore, with a light heart and full confidence of success that he approached Dr. Griffith's office on the evening in question.

The doctor was out when he called, and Mr. Harway retired to a neighboring restaurant and regaled himself with liberal doses of cold gin and water until it was almost ten o'clock, when he returned to the doctor's office.

Dr. Griffith was in when he called the second time, but Mr. Harway could see at a glance that he was not in a very amiable mood; his brow was knitted, and a dull passion shone in his eyes which showed that his temper was none of the mildest, and that it would be dangerous to trifle with him. He had not yet recovered from his interview with Mr. Howson, and he looked very much as if would like to have some object to vent his anger on. Mr. Harway noticed the look and instinctively kept near the door, remaining standing with the dilapidated hat in one hand and the dirty handkerchief in the other, as if prepared for instant flight on the first hostile demonstration.

The dirty handkerchief was dirtier than ever, and appeared to have been innocent of soap and water since we last saw Mr. Harway using it; he gave it a slight flourish now, and polished his face a bit before addressing the doctor.

Griffith sat by the table smiling rather grimly at his visitor and apparently enjoying his surprise at his cool reception.

"So, you have really had the impudence to come back, after what I promised you. Well, what is your story now. You have found Mamie, I suppose?"

"Yes; she is living in Longueuil."

"That's a lie."

"I'm a perfect gentleman, and as such I never tell a lie when the truth will do as well. I saw you with her with my own two eyes. I'm blessed if I didn't, ten days ago."

"Did you? Well you might have seen me in Longueuil some days ago with a lady whom I allowed to call herself Mrs. Griffith, a title she had no legal claim to; but how can you prove that that lady was Mamie Morton, or my wife?" Bad as he was it cost him a pang to say this, and he turned a little way as he spoke of Mamie as being his mistress.

"You're a deep one, Doc," said Mr. Harway partially recovering his composure and advancing a little from his position near the door, "you're a deep one, but I think I can prove too many for you. You see, I thought you would try some such game as this, so I'm ready to answer all questions; for I'm a perfect gentleman, and it ain't polite to refuse to answer another gentleman's questions, if they are civilly put. I know you're married, for I saw the ceremony, and I've been to New York and have a copy of the certificate; I know it's Miss Morton you married, for I recognized her myself as the gal I saved, and my sister, who saw her only two or three days before she left New York, will come on here and identify her. Oh, you're a deep one, Doc, but I euchre you this time, for I've got both bowers and the ace, and I mean to play them unless you do the square thing."

"Do you? Play away, my dilapidated friend, but you won't win. How long is it since you were in Longueuil?"

"About ten days."

"Then you have not seen this?" As he spoke he extended a copy of the *Star* for that evening to Mr. Harway who read, with astonishment, the following paragraph under the heading "Deaths":

"At Longueuil, on 7th inst., Mrs. Mary Griffith, aged thirty-one."

"Well, I'm blessed!" exclaimed Mr. Harway, depositing the dilapidated hat on the floor and taking both hands to give his face a good polishing with the dirty handkerchief. "I'm blessed if you ain't killed her again."

"Killed her. Who says so?" shouted the doctor in so fierce a manner, and springing forward so suddenly that Mr. Harway made one desperate dive for the dilapidated hat, and, missing it, bolted bare-headed for the door. Once gaining this point of

vantage, he stood half-in half-out of the room, holding the door with one hand so as to be able to close it at a moment's warning, and ventured to explain :

“ You needn’t cut up so rough, Doc, I didn’t mean to say you had murdered the gal, of course not, you ain’t such a fool as that ; I mean you’re trying to play off again that she’s dead when she ain’t. But it won’t do,” he continued, gaining confidence and edging himself slightly towards the dilapidated hat, “ it won’t do ; I see your game plain now, and if you don’t do the right thing by twelve o’clock to-morrow, I’ll blow the whole story to Mr. Morton and Mr. Howson ; they’ll thank me, and pay me too, so you see it ain’t no use cutting up rough, Doc, for if you don’t come down with the dust right off, I’ll let the cat out of the bag sure as my name is James Harway, and I’m a perfect gentleman, and I never tell a lie when the truth will do as well.”

He stooped, as he finished, to pick up the dilapidated hat, with the evident intention of making a dignified and imposing exit ; but the temptation of the bent figure was too great for Dr. Griffith, and ere, Mr. Harway had regained an upright position, the doctor’s foot was raised, and a vigorous and well directed kick sent the perfect gentleman head first into the hall-way, where he carromed on the hat-rack and pocketed himself in the coal scuttle standing at the foot of the stairs, and lay a helpless mass, while the doctor stood over him glowering with rage, and looking very much as if he intended to repeat the operation.

“ Will you ?” he exclaimed fiercely, “ then let me tell you that if you are not out of Montreal before to-morrow I will have you in jail for robbery and arson. I’ve been making inquiries too, and I’ve made discoveries as well as you, and I have discovered that Mr. James Harway is very badly wanted at Brattleboro, Vt., to explain what he knows about breaking into the Bank there three months ago and setting fire to it. I’ve telegraphed for the detectives, and they will be here to-morrow morning ; so if you know what is good for you I would advise you to get out of this at once ; it’s no use trying to blackmail me for I won’t stand it, and your secret, as you call it, is worth nothing ; if I really cared that Charlie Morton should not know that his sister only died three days ago instead of six years, as he supposes, would I have advertised her death in the papers where anybody can see it. You are a very shallow fool, my dilapidated friend, and have over-reached yourself by trying to be too smart. A week or ten days

ago I might have been induced to buy you off, but now I am free, and nothing will you get from me but hard words and harder blows. I have the cards in my own hand now and I mean to win, and when I say that, I am hard to beat."

He slammed the office door behind him and left Mr. Harway to pick himself up and leave the house the best way he could.

That gentleman did not, however, seem in a great hurry to leave, for he remained several seconds where he had fallen, wiping his face in a mechanical sort of way with the dirty handkerchief, and ejaculating occasionally,

"I'm blessed."

At last he rose, shook himself together a bit, put on the dilapidated hat, brushed his boots with the dirty handkerchief as if to shake the dust from off his feet, and slowly left the house. Once safe on the sidewalk he paused a moment and shaking his fist at the house, said :

"This game ain't played out yet, Doc, and you don't hold as many trumps as you suppose ; I'll have to clear out pretty sudden, that's evident, I don't want any detectives after me, but I'll fire a shot at you before I go that'll make you jump. Hard to beat, are you ? Well so am I, plaguy hard, as you'll find out before I'm done with you. Kick me out, did you ? I'll make that the worst kick you ever gave anybody as sure as I'm a perfect gentleman. I'm blessed," he continued, turning to go down the hill, "if I ain't as dry as a red hot stove. I must get a little cool, refreshing gin pretty soon, or I'll go off by spontaneous combustion."

The idea of so lamentable an occurrence seemed to animate him greatly, and he started down the hill at a good pace.

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## SCENE II.

### MR. FOWLER GETS DRUNK.

TIME, September tenth, eighteen hundred and seventy ; place, Mrs. Grub's boarding-house in St. Urbain street.

Mr. Augustus Fowler, commonly known as "Gus," stood before the cracked looking-glass in his room in St. Urbain street, endeavoring to arrange his neck-tie to his entire satisfaction : and at last, after fifteen minutes of hard labor and great loss of patience, he found he had so crumpled and soiled the delicate white muslin

cravat he had intended to wear, that he was forced to abandon the idea of using it, and content himself with a black "butterfly" which had seen some service, but which possessed the advantage of having only to be hooked on to his collar button.

You may laugh, if you please to, at Mr. Fowler for his clumsiness, but I tell you there is more in tying a neck-tie than is generally supposed. A neck-tie *per se* is generally an amiable and well-disposed article of dress to manage, that is when a man don't care much whether it ties or not; a dexterous twist of the wrists, a skilful use of the thumbs and fore-fingers, and it falls into its place at once; but, make a combination of love and a neck-tie, and the tie immediately becomes a fierce and untameable monster, obstinately refusing to be managed on any terms, and slipping, twisting, crumpling, and getting dirty in a most extraordinary manner.

Mr. Fowler was in love, and—mind this is a secret—he was going to see his girl. Is it any wonder then that it took him so long to arrange his neck-tie to his satisfaction; first it refused to go under the collar at all, and, slipping from his hand, fell on the floor, when he put his foot on it and soiled one end; then it twisted itself inside out and showed the seam in front, which necessitated his untying it after he had accomplished what he considered a most successful bow.

It was a wonderful tie for getting up under the left ear; you may have noticed that ties seem to have a weakness for getting under one ear, and that there is a great partiality shown for the left ear; but this tie of Fowler's was as much in love with his left ear as he, Fowler, was with Bessie Sudlow, and persisted in getting up under it so often that by the time he had finished trying to pull it straight for the hundredth time, the tie was finished too, and, having lost all shape and semblance of a well-made cravat, appeared only as a limp, crumpled, dirty piece of muslin, which Mr. Fowler discarded, and adopted the "butterfly," which, being of gentle disposition, was more easily managed.

It was half-past seven, and Mr. Fowler had to hurry, or run the dreadful risk of being late, and so receive Miss Bessie's reproaches; he therefore endeavored to complete the remainder of his toilette as speedily as possible.

His hair did not take him over five minutes; it had been cut, and shampooed, and oiled, and brushed, and curled, and puffed up to the last point of excruciation only half-an-hour before by one

of the St. Lawrence Hall barbers, and Mr. Fowler had not intended to touch it at all ; but, in putting on a clean shirt, which he found absolutely necessary, although extremely careful, he had an accident ; his collar button caught in the puff over the left ear, entirely demolishing it, and destroying at one fell tug the work which it had taken a painstaking barber nearly five minutes to accomplish. Mr. Fowler did not exactly swear, but he gave vent to a guttural expression which sounded something like an oath, and, as he tried again and again to restore that puff over the left ear to something like its pristine splendor, he gave vent to various expressions of impatience which did not sound altogether like blessings.

At last the puff over the left ear was settled to his satisfaction ; his neck-tie remained firm and well arranged under his collar ; his nether habiliments hung gracefully to his heels ; his shirt-front presented an unruffled space of white linen, starched to the last degree of stiffness, and ornamented with three small gold studs, and he had nothing to do but to put on his vest and coat and be ready to start.

Nothing else to do ? Mr. Fowler remembered, with a sudden start, and a cold feeling down the back, that he did have something else to do, and that something very important, and he looked down at his slippered feet with a sigh.

He had forgotten to put on his boots.

Now putting on a pair of boots, especially old, well-worn ones is not a difficult or dangerous task ; but, struggling into a brand new pair of patent leathers—made tight in the leg to suit the close-fitting trowsers—is a very different thing, and Mr. Fowler fully recognized the fact as he gazed at the brightly shining foot coverers calmly reposing under the table, and despairingly contemplated the probable consequences to the stiffly-starched shirt-front, or the possibility of bursting a button off his pantaloons, or of totally annihilating his shirt-collar.

There was no help for it ; he must get them on ; he could not go in his slippers, and his old boots were too far advanced into the “sere and yellow” to be seen in company with the gorgeous apparel which he had provided especially for this occasion ; he, therefore, sat with a sigh of resignation on the edge of a chair and tried to persuade the new-comers to go on easy.

He tried the right boot first—somehow men generally do try the right boot first—and it went on beautifully ; one strong steady

pull, a slight wriggling of the toes, a light tap of the heel, and it was on. Mr. Fowler felt so elated at his success that he rose and walked a few steps about the room in the one boot and a slipper to see how it went. It went well ; and he re-seated himself with a satisfied air to try the left boot.

When accidents happen, they usually occur with the left boot, and so it was with Mr. Fowler ; just in proportion as the right boot had gone on easy, so the left boot seemed determined to have a struggle for it before yielding and allowing itself to be walked in as any respectable boot ought to do. First there was a decided misunderstanding between the heel and the instep ; both wanted to go down together—the heel having a little the worst of it,—which resulted in a dead-lock, and no amount of wriggling and steady pulling could persuade that boot to budge ; then Mr. Fowler discovered that the boot was twisted a little, and he had to take it off and put it on straight, then the toes got bent under the sock, which had become a little damp with the perspiration super-induced by the exertion of the first encounter, stuck to the lining of the boot, and another dead-lock ensued.

A good five minutes had been spent ; the hands of the clock pointed to five minutes to eight, and Mr. Fowler very nearly swore as he pulled off the refractory boot for the second time ; he rose and, going to the dressing-table, took up a box of powdered chalk, and poured a portion of its contents into the boot, giving it a good shake to make the powder spread.

“ I’ll get you on this time,” he muttered, “ or I’ll know why.”

He knew why right off. Seating himself on the edge of the chair, he elevated his foot, inserted it into the boot, and, after gently working it well down, gave “ a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether,” firmly determined to get it on then or never. But, alas for the vanity of human expectations ! While the foot was at its greatest altitude, while the pull was at its maximum strength, and the boot at its severest point of resistance, “ crack, crack,” went both straps, and Mr. Fowler, totally unprepared for so unforeseen a catastrophe, fell backward over the chair, and rolled ignominiously on the floor, to the serious disarrangement of the stiff shirt-front, and very nearly causing a dislocation of the collar button.

Then he did swear. There was no doubt at all about it this time ; he gave vent to an expression which ought to have convinced any right-minded boot that it ought to go on ; but no, that

obstinate boot was beyond control, and could not be by any means persuaded to do its duty, and so, after one more ineffectual trial, Mr. Fowler was forced to give up the contest. Mournfully he pulled off the right boot, which had behaved so well; spitefully he kicked away the left boot, which had behaved so badly; and, with a sad, but resigned smile, put on the old boots which he had so scornfully rejected a few minutes before.

The boots were old; they were slightly torn, and they needed cleaning; but there was no help for it, he must wear them or nothing, so he wisely determined to submit to circumstances and don his old friends, mentally resolving, however, that he would keep his feet as much under the sofa as possible, or hide them behind the friendly shade of Bessie's dress if he was permitted to sit sufficiently close to her.

But they needed cleaning. That fault was quickly remedied, and in a short time he had them shining like mirrors. He pulled them on, placed his feet together and gazed at them with something like a smile of satisfaction; they did not look so bad after all; it was wonderful how a good dose of blacking and a little skilful brushing had improved their personal appearance. Ah! there was one flaw he discovered; the right toe had been missed; it did not shine with the resplendent brightness of the surrounding leather: he elevated his foot on the edge of the chair, stooped over, brush in hand, to rectify the omission, and—oh! luckless Fowler!—in that fatal moment the sole button by which his braces were fastened behind gave way with a loud snap, and he could feel his trowsers give a sudden start towards his knees.

Here was a terrible position; he could not go out without braces, his trowsers would not keep up without them: it was too late to think of taking them off and sewing on a button, it would take too much time, so there was nothing left to do but to go down stairs to the servant girl, and meekly request her to pin him up, which she obligingly consented to do, and accomplished the task after having only twice run the pin into his back.

Poor Fowler! his misfortunes had been great, and he was not in a very sweet or serene mood when he finally lit a cigarette—a cigar would have taken too long to smoke—and, after putting a few cloves in his pocket, started for Miss Sudlow's residence.

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Miss Bessie Sudlow, the object of Mr. Fowler's adoration, was a fair-haired little creature of sixteen with whom he had managed

to get acquainted during her walks to and from school. She lived with her mother and aunt in a small, two-storey house in St. Dominique street. The house had a high stoop, and the few square feet of ground in front of it were enclosed by a low picket fence. Mr. Fowler had succeeded in gaining an introduction to Mrs. Sudlow, but that lady thought Miss Bessie altogether too young to think of having a lover, and Mr. Fowler's visits were discountenanced.

He had not seen Miss Bessie for several days, and dared not call at the house to inquire for her; it was, therefore, with most pleasurable surprise that he opened a delicate little envelope, which smelt strongly of musk and was ornamented with a very fat little boy without any clothes, thoughtlessly pointing a headless arrow at nothing, and read the following note:

“ DEAR GUS:—I have been sick for three days, mother and auntie are going out to spend the evening, and Chloe will have to go to market, so I shall be alone until about half-past nine. Come up if you can. The gas is very bad, and the parlor is almost dark at nights, come up, won’t you ?

BESSIE.”

It was nearly half-past eight when Mr. Fowler reached the house where his loved one dwelt; as he got near to it he threw away the remnant of his cigarette, hastily took a couple of cloves from his pocket, chewed them up a bit and swallowed them. He then smoothed down his shirt front as much as its rumpled condition would permit of, straightened his tie, gave a final pull at his collar to see that it was all right, ran his fingers lightly over that left puff to be sure it had not got out of place, tugged at his vest to make it lie smooth, gave himself a sort of a shake to be perfectly certain that everything was all right, and then rang the bell.

There was the tripping of light footsteps in the hall; the slight rustle of a dress: a faint suspicion of patchouli floating through the keyhole, and then the latch was raised and—

Well, the door didn’t open.

There was a slight sound of impatience on the inside of the door; a strong tug to open it—the door didn’t seem to mind that;—and then there was a curious settling sound, as if some one adorned with copious crinoline had suddenly sat down; then came another rustling movement as if the same crinoline was getting up again, and at last a soft voice said,

“ Is that you, Gus ? ”

"Yes, darling." Mr. Fowler used the word darling because he felt confident he could not be overheard, and he also gained a little additional assurance from the fact of a two inch door interposing between him and the person he thus ventured to address. He had thought several times that he would like to call Bessie "darling," but, somehow, when the proper moment for using the term arrived, he had always lost courage and had substituted some other word not quite as affectionate; but now, thanks to the interposing door he had gained courage enough to use the term, and he felt as if he had accomplished something, and mentally determined to try to use it again when there was no interposing door and it might lead to happier results.

"Oh, dear!" said the voice on the other side of the door, "the door is locked!"

"Unlock it, darling," promptly replied Mr. Fowler, now fully making up his mind to use that term of endearment and no other.

"But I can't, Gus, the key is gone."

"D——n it," ejaculated Mr. Fowler; this word sounded a little, a very little, like "darling" through the key-hole, and Miss Bessie thought it was, but the now enlightened reader knows it wasn't.

"Oh, Gus," she said, "what shall I do; that old fool Chloe has locked me in and carried away the key. I cannot open the door."

"I can't crawl through the key-hole, darling," said Mr. Fowler with a desperate attempt at gaiety, but feeling that if Chloe had been present in the flesh, and he had a good big pocket knife, he would have liked to cut her up into small pieces and introduce her in detail into the aforesaid orifice.

"No, Gus," said Miss Bessie, "but—but—don't you think—perhaps—couldn't you try—that is, the window isn't very high, you know."

"Of course it isn't," said Mr. Fowler, as the idea suddenly dawned on him. "I've climbed higher places before now."

"Then wait a minute until I open it, and you can get in that way."

There was another gentle rustle of crinoline, and the soft tripping of little feet, and Mr. Fowler gave a slight hitch to his trowsers, just as sailors are popularly supposed to be constantly doing, and prepared to climb up through the window.

I have said that there was a low picket fence enclosing the few feet of ground in front of the house, and against this Mr. Fowler leaned in the most picturesque attitude he knew how to assume, until the window opened and Miss Bessie appeared.

How beautiful she looked in the dim, shadowy light with her golden hair framing her pure, girlish face all aglow with excitement, and the dim gas light—it was bad as she had said—throwing a faint beam of brightness over her. Very beautiful she looked, and very deeply in love Mr. Fowler felt, and he determined to exhibit his prowess before his lady love, as gallant knights of old were wont to do before theirs.

I have said that the picket fence was low, in fact it was about two feet and a half high, and as Mr. Fowler's left hand rested on the top he thought he would exhibit his powers as a gymnast—he was a pretty good one too—and so he made a slight spring and vaulted lightly over it.

Oh, poor misguided Fowler! what made you change color so violently, and place your hand so suddenly behind you, as you alighted on the little grass plot? That treacherous pin had given way, his braces were again unfastened and his trowsers in imminent danger of sagging down uncomfortably. There was no friendly servant maid at hand now; no way to repair the terrible damage, and he could only look up at the beauteous vision above him and sigh.

The window was about eight feet high, and Fowler could have easily sprung up so as to grasp the window sill and swing himself into the room; but, "what would be the consequences?" He shuddered as he thought what they might be, and he stretched his hand up, as if to test the distance, and said sadly,

"It's too high."

"Can't you jump, Gus?" asked Miss Bessie, who was rather hurt at her lover's apparent apathy, "I thought you could jump ever so high."

"I could," said Mr. Fowler, sadly, "but—but I've sprained my," braces, he was going to say, but added, "ankle."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," said Miss Bessie, leaning down towards him, and looking more like an angel than ever, he thought, "does it hurt you much?"

"No—yes—that is, not a great deal."

"I'm sorry," said Miss Bessie again, sympathetically, then, suddenly, "Oh, Gus! I've a splendid idea; I'll get the step ladder

Chloe uses to hang the clothes up and then you can get up without any trouble. Wait a moment, and I will bring it."

The beautiful vision, as Mr. Fowler called it, disappeared, and he occupied a few spare minutes before her return in endeavoring to find the remnants of that treacherous pin, so that he might make some kind of temporary repairs, if possible; but no, no trace of the pin could be found, and he could only give an extra hitch or two to his trowsers, and await Miss Bessie's return.

She soon came, and tears almost stood in her bright little eyes as she said.

"I declare it's too bad, Gus, that hateful old Chloe has locked the door at the bottom of the stairs leading to the kitchen, and I cannot get the steps to help you up; I'm so sorry."

She leaned far out of the window, and he drew himself together as if for one desperate spring; for one moment he hesitated, then prudence prevailed over rashness and he contented himself with reaching up to her and trying to take her hand. She held it down provokingly near him and he seized the plump little palm in his and gently squeezed it. The pressure was returned; he could swear it was, and he raised himself yet a little higher that he might press the dainty little fingers to his lips; his head was thrown back and his gaze fixed on the radiant face which glowed less than two feet above him; one more effort and he could reach her hand; his throat was swelling with the strain of stretching so much, but with a strong effort he raised himself a couple of inches, his lips were pressed to her fingers, he was drinking in sweet draughts of loving consent from her eyes when—"crack" went that faithless collar button, his "butterfly" fell to the earth, both ends of his collar started up under his ears, and he dropped to the ground thoroughly disheartened and discouraged.

Miss Bessie, who did not know the misfortune which had happened to him, was surprised at his letting go of her hand so suddenly, but she said nothing; she was just beginning to remember that it was not very proper to have a young man standing under the window kissing her hand, and that some of the neighbors might see it, and report the fact to her mother, so she said:

"Gus, it's no use my keeping you standing there, you can't get in, that's evident, and it is after nine now and Chloe might come back at any minute, so I had better say good night. I shall be going to school on Monday, and, if you like, I will meet you after school is over, at the old place, and we will go to Alexander's and have some cream."

Of course Mr. Fowler could make no response to this but "yes;" he had not courage enough now to add "darling," his two misfortunes coming so suddenly on him had rather dispirited him, and he climbed over the fence—he did not dare to jump this time—in a rather lazy, careless manner. He stood for a moment sadly on the sidewalk, half-irresolute which way to turn, and then fell on his ear a soft, silvery voice, saying gently:

"Good-bye until Monday, Gus, dear."

How sweetly that word of endearment slipped from her ruby lips, and how delightful they sounded to the enchanted Mr. Fowler; his heart gave a great bound, and he very nearly scaled the fence and made a jump at the window to steal a kiss from the sweet ruby lips which had uttered that fond word; but, prudence forbade, and he merely threw back his head and kissed his hand to her, saying gaily:

"Good night, darling."

Ah, luckless Fowler, his evil genius was pressing him hard to-night, for as he threw back his head the action made the loose end of his collar fly up and strike him in the eye which caused him to turn weeping away.

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Mr. Fowler wended his way slowly and sadly down St. Dominique street; he chose the darker and least frequented side of the street—although both sides are dark enough, for that matter—and kept well in the shade of the houses with his coat collar pulled up about his throat. He walked pensively down as far as Craig street and took a short cut across the Champ de Mars, steering as directly as possible for the Richelieu Hotel. Arrived there he enlisted the good services of the urbane bar-keeper, Isidore, and with his aid and assistance got himself pretty securely pinned up—two pins, crosswise, in the braces this time.

Then Mr. Fowler thought he would take a drink; having taken it, he concluded he wanted a smoke, took a cigar and sat down to enjoy it; after a little while he concluded he would take another drink and did so.

I am afraid Mr. Fowler's disturbed and uneasy state of mind had rather interfered with his usual steady and sober habits, for, on the entrance of some acquaintances, he insisted upon standing drinks round on the ground that he was "just going to have one." After that one others followed, and when Mr. Fowler left, in com-

pany with his friends, about ten o'clock, he was very doubtful whether there was only one St. Vincent street for him to walk up or two ; if he shut one eye and took a good square look he could only see one ; but, every time he looked with both eyes he could see two, and one of them seemed to be performing a slow waltz around the other ; which was moving and which was standing still he could not quite determine, any more than he could make up his mind which was the nearest way home for him to take, the one that moved or the one that stood still.

It was very puzzling to settle this question, and Mr. Fowler leaned up against the house so that he might think about it at his leisure ; what bothered him most was when he shut the left eye and saw one street standing still, it would begin to move as soon as he opened the right eye ; but if he looked with the right eye he could see a stationary street which immediately began moving when he opened the left eye ; that was what he could not settle to his satisfaction, whether it was the street he saw with his right eye that was moving, or whether it was the one he saw with his left, and so he leaned against the wall to think about it.

He was not, however, permitted to remain there long, for one of his companions, who was sober, took him by the arm and pulled him forward.

"Come on, Gus, old boy," he said. "I had no idea you were so bad as this."

"Tshall rite," replied Mr. Fowler, "I'm perf'ly sober ; on' I cou'ndt tell which street to go'p."

"What on earth have you been drinking to get you so tight in such a hurry. I never saw you so before. What did you drink ?"

"Braces," replied Mr. Fowler, sententiously.

"What ?"

"An' collar but'n."

"I think you must be going mad," replied his companion. "Here, boys," to the others, "call a cab and let us take him home."

A cab was speedily brought and Mr. Fowler and his companions got in. Mr. Fowler recovered quite as rapidly as he had been attacked. His drunkenness seemed to be of that evanescent kind which will partially prostrate a man for a few minutes, but rapidly passes away. By the time the cab reached Place d'Armes Hill he was more than half-sober, and protested against going home in such plausible terms that his companions, thinking he was all

right agreed to his proposal to go down to Freeman's and have some oysters.

After oysters—and a few glasses of “ ‘alf-and-‘alf” to prevent the oysters disagreeing with them—a game of billiards was proposed and the four adjourned to Chadwick's where they got a private room and enjoyed a quiet game for about an hour.

It must not be supposed that these games were played dry ; on the contrary they were wet games, that is to say the losers of each game had to pay for drinks ; there were not many drinks, because there were not many games ; but Mr. Fowler conceived a passionate desire for brandy cock-tails, and not content with the regular drinks on each game indulged in several “drinks between drinks,” which tended to make his playing rather peculiar.

Wonderful billiards did Mr. Fowler play, and marvellous were the shots he made. The principal difficulty seemed to be that he saw too many balls on the table ; he never saw less than seven or eight, unless he shut one eye, and then he invariably missed, and the extraordinary manner in which they managed to run about the table without hitting each other greatly surprised him. Still he was not discouraged, and, although he seldom made a shot, and rarely struck anything but the cushion, he was hopeful and confident to the last, and felt fully persuaded that when he “got his hand in ” he could do wonders.

But although he could do nothing with the balls he did wonders with the chalk ; every time he missed a stroke he chalked his cue ; not content with chalking the tip he covered it half way up its length with a thick coat of chalk ; he chalked the butt ; he chalked his hand clear up to his wrist ; he chalked the cushion every time he had to rest his hand on it ; he chalked the bridge whenever he had to use it ; he chalked his trowsers and his nose, and once, in a fit of partial abstraction, he meditatively began chalking his head until he had introduced a large premature patch of grey hairs.

Still he wasn't drunk. Oh, dear no ! He said he wasn't, and he ought to know. He kept his legs well, however, walked about all right, and talked pretty reasonably ; his face was very much flushed, and his eyes looked as if they had been boiled and had not got thoroughly cooked, but he behaved quietly and orderly, much more so than some sober men do.

About eleven the party left Chadwick's and went down to the St. James, where they had a parting drink, Mr. Fowler avowing

his intention of going to St. Urbain street, and his companions starting for their boarding-house in University street.

I don't think Mr. Fowler could have gone directly home, for it was nearly twelve o'clock when he found himself opposite the Bank of Montreal; he could still walk a little, but in a very uncertain and wobbling sort of way. The sidewalk in front of the Bank must decidedly have been too narrow, for, although there was no one else near him at the time, Mr. Fowler could not find room to pass the lamp-post, and so ran against it.

"Skuze me, o' fel'w; didden shee'r."

He leaned up against it, and feeling one of the projecting ornaments, took hold of it and shook it warmly.

"'S hall rite, o' fel'w; 'll shee'r home, nev' f'ar."

He passed his arm affectionately around the post, and leaned his head against it; his hat fell off, but he did not notice it, and in a few seconds he was more than half-asleep.

"Look a here, young fellar," said a loud, authoritative voice in his ear, "this 'ere won't do. What's the matter with you?" and a blue-coated limb of the law laid his hand on his shoulder and gave him a shake.

"'S hall rite, p'lesman; my fr'n 'll take m' home."

"Will he; well I think not; I'll just run you in and leave you where you'll be well taken care of; so come along, young fellar, and no nonsense with you;" and to show his earnestness in his intention of "running him in" he took Mr. Fowler by the arm and turned his steps towards the Central Station. But it was no use; tired and outraged nature could stand it no longer, and before he had got him fairly across the street, Mr. Fowler was fast asleep and fell heavily on the sidewalk. Fortunately he did not hurt himself, and the policeman, calling a cab, put him into it and took him down to the Central Station, where he was placed in one of the cells in a state of unconsciousness.

Mr. Fowler did not awake from his drunken sleep until about six o'clock in the morning. He had not passed a very quiet or agreeable night; he had slept, but that sleep had been greatly disturbed by dreams which were partially realities. He dreamt that he was chained down to a bed of ice, while legions of fierce and terrible-looking monsters galloped over him, and he was powerless to resist their constant attacks. Monstrously hideous shapes, with long, clammy, sticky legs, seemed to crawl with sickening sliminess over his face, nibbling at his lips and eyes,

and scratching with malignant pleasure the end of his nose. Curious fantastic visions of monster rats, with huge glittering white teeth, and tails of prodigious length and thickness, passed before him. Squeaks of surpassing loudness and shrillness were ringing in his ears, and the dull, rusty creaking of gigantic portals ever and anon crashed upon his brain. Wild shrieks, and cries, and ribald laughter, and profane words seemed to ring perpetually in the air ; the low wail of sorrow, the wild outburst of frenzy, the piteous pleading of maudlin drunkenness were heard over and over by him. A dim chaos of sound appeared to be rolling constantly through his mind, and slowly moulding itself into definite shape. He slept; but it was the troubled, distempered sleep of the drunkard, which racks and wrenches the brain with frightful visions, and leaves him in the morning with tired, aching limbs, and a dull, heavy head with sharp shooting pains darting through it.

It was still quite dark in the close, fetid cell when Mr. Fowler awoke and tried to collect his scattered senses sufficiently to tell where he was. The horrors of his dream were partially realised, for there were ancient and wise looking rats prospecting about the bodies of the recumbent figures on the damp floor, and regiments, squadrons, brigades and armies of cockroaches were performing their evolutions along the floor, the walls, the sleepers and the ceiling ; the atmosphere was heavy with the fumes of stale liquor and still staler tobacco, and it seemed as if a combination of every known and unknown stench pervaded the place.

There was about a dozen inmates of the cell beside Mr. Fowler, and they were for the most part lying on the floor in all sorts of uncomfortable positions just as they had fallen when first brought in ; some laid on their back with arms and legs distended, mouths open and stentorian breathing denoting that they had not yet recovered from their drunken sleep ; others were crouched into small heaps, head down, looking as if dead, one or two were awake and standing at the barred door trying to induce the turnkey to procure them some coffee. One man was sitting in a corner of the cell mumbling over something to himself, and as Mr. Fowler rose to approach the door he struck this man with his foot.

“ I beg your pardon, sir,” he said politely, “ it was quite accidental I assure you ; but this place is so crowded there is scarcely room to move without striking some one.”

“ All right,” replied the man, “ that’s enough, you’re a gentle-

man I can see, and as I'm a perfect gentleman myself I can't expect anything more than an apology from another gentleman."

The man rose and approached the door at the same time as Fowler, and they enquired together if they could be allowed to bail themselves out.

Mr. Harway (for, of course, it was him) appeared greatly relieved when told that his bail would be two dollars and a half, and still more so when informed that four dollars and a half had been found on him when he was picked up drunk on Notre Dame street.

"All right, Doc," he muttered. "I'll give you the slip yet; your detectives can't arrive before half-past nine, and by that time I shall be well on my way to New York." He stood near the door while Mr. Fowler made inquiry about his case and overheard what was said.

Mr. Fowler's case was very simple, two dollars and a half was required for bail and he was free to go. But here a difficulty arose; Mr. Fowler didn't happen to have two dollars and a half, and he inquired whether he could send for a friend. The turnkey replied that he could do so, and, after some delay, brought a small boy who, in consideration of a promised quarter, agreed to go to Mrs. Grub's and inform Mr. Farron of the unpleasant condition his room-mate was in.

While Mr. Fowler had been talking to the turnkey, Mr. Harway had been observing him attentively; and, when the boy had been despatched, he turned to Fowler and said:

"Excuse me, sir, I'm a perfect gentleman, and I mean no offence, but ain't I seen you somewhere before?"

"Very likely," replied Mr. Fowler, good humoredly. "I'm pretty well known in Montreal."

"I'm blessed!" exclaimed Mr. Harway, as a sudden light seemed to break in on him. "I'm blessed if you ain't the gentleman that was so anxious to break the little game of faro I had at the last races. You shouldn't play so reckless, sir, or you'll lose your money."

"I'm pretty sure to lose it playing with you," rejoined Mr. Fowler, turning away; but Mr. Harway put his hand on his arm and detained him.

"Excuse me, sir, but you were with Mr. Morton that day, wasn't you?"

"Yes."

"He's a great friend of yours, ain't he?"

"Yes; what business of yours is that?"

"Well, I'm blessed!" said Mr. Harway, with emphasis; "I'm blessed if this ain't the queerest go I ever heard of. Now, Doc, my boy, I'll be square with you before night. I couldn't afford to stay in the city long enough to do it myself, but I'll fix you now, never fear. Come here a minute, if you please, sir," he continued to Fowler; "I have something of importance to tell you which concerns your friend, Mr. Morton. I'm a perfect gentleman, and I never tells a lie when the truth will do as well, so you can believe every word I say."

The two men sat down together, and before Mr. Farron had arrived Mr. Harway had related all he knew about Dr. Griffith to the astonished Mr. Fowler.

"I don't suppose I shall make anything out of this job now," said Mr. Harway, in conclusion; "but I promised the Doc I'd get square with him for that kick last night, and I'm a perfect gentleman, and always keep my word when it don't pay better to break it."

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### SCENE III.

#### MR. MORTON GETS INFORMATION.

THE trifling matter of providing bail for Mr. Fowler having been satisfactorily arranged by Mr. Farron, the two gentlemen left the Station, accompanied by Mr. Harway, and proceeded to the Jacques Cartier Hotel where Mr. Harway insisted that it was necessary to his peace of mind and happiness that he should have a little cold gin.

"What will you take, gentlemen," he said: "I always find a little cold gin lies very warm on the stomach in the morning; it's a good thing for the digestion too, and helps the appetite wonderfully if you put a little bitters in it. Gin and bitters," he continued, to the bar-keeper, "I'll put in the gin."

He about half filled a tumbler with raw gin, added a few drops of bitters and swallowed the mixture without troubling the water jug. Mr. Fowler needed the cool and refreshing services of a "John Collins" to restore him, and Mr. Farron wisely contented himself with a cigar.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Harway, after the drinks had been disposed of, "I leave it to you to see your friend Mr. Morton righted. I'm blessed if I wouldn't like to stay and see the game out myself; but, there's folks coming here on this morning train that I don't want to see, and so I'll have to leave; but I trust to you to fix the doctor all right. I told him I'd be even with him for that kick, and I like to keep my word; and, if the affair gets into the papers, perhaps you wouldn't mind sending me one, gentlemen, I'd esteem it a favor, and as I'm a perfect gentlemen I am always willing to accept a favor from another gentleman. You see," he continued, "I shouldn't have minded anything so much as a kick; if he had knocked me down with his fist, I shouldn't have cared so much about it; I've had that done before. Even if he had fired at me with a revolver I should not have minded so long as it didn't hit me; but a gentleman naturally has his feelings hurt when he gets kicked like a dog, and, as I'm a perfect gentleman, I couldn't stand it. So blow his game, gentlemen, and let me know of it, if you can."

After delivering this speech Mr. Harway gave an address to Fowler, and then bowed himself out, and started for the depot to leave the city before the detectives from Battleboro' arrived.

Mr. Fowler retired to his boarding house and betook himself to bed where he endeavoured to sleep off the effects of his last night's potations. It was afternoon before he felt sufficiently recovered to go out, and when he reached Mr. Morton's office he found that gentleman had gone for a drive around the mountain with some friends from the States; he was therefore compelled to postpone his intended disclosure until the evening when he was told Morton would be at home. He, however, utilized the afternoon by a trip to Longueuil where he discovered the house lately occupied by Mrs. Griffith, closed, and obtained particulars of her death from the neighbors.

Mr. Harway had carefully instilled into Mr. Fowler's mind his own theory that Mrs. Griffith was not dead at all, but merely removed by the Doctor; he, therefore, paid but little attention to the account of the funeral, etc., which he heard from the people he questioned on the subject; and it was in a strong belief that Mamie was alive that he called at Mr. Morton's in the evening.

Mr. Morton had only returned from his drive a few minutes when Mr. Fowler entered his room, and he was enjoying a quiet

pipe and a glass of ale when Mr. Fowler made his presence known by a loud rap on the door.

"Come in," said Mr. Morton, and Mr. Fowler did as requested ; he sat by the table where Mr. Morton was seated and said, in a confidential sort of way :

"Charlie, I have something very serious to say to you."

Charlie Morton smiled quietly, for he was accustomed to receive half-confidences from Mr. Fowler, who was always getting himself into some little scrape.

"What is it, Gus ; anything I can manage for you ?"

"No ; it is something you must manage for yourself. I got into difficulties last night, old fellow, and—well—you see, the fact is—I got into quod."

"Arrested ?"

"Yes." It cost Mr. Fowler something to make this confession ; for Charlie Morton was one of the few men whose good opinion he valued ; and he scarcely wanted to let him know where he had spent the night ; still there was no way of explaining his story except by a full statement of the circumstances under which he had gained his information ; so, Mr. Fowler "made a clean breast of it," and gave a full account of his meeting with Mr. Harway, and all that had been told him by that personage.

"I'll tell you what it is, Charlie," he said in conclusion, "it's my opinion that Harry Griffith is a rascal."—I am rather afraid that Mr. Fowler used an adjective before the word rascal, but I don't like to record it without being very sure—"he is playing some double game, which I do not quite understand ; but confound him I want to see his game spoiled."

Mr. Fowler struck the table with his clenched hand as if exemplifying the way he would like to see the doctor spoiled ; but unfortunately he was rather too excited, and struck the table so hard that he hurt his knuckles, and put the back of his hand up to his mouth in the most inglorious and unheroic manner.

Charlie Morton did not say anything for some minutes ; he was strongly and deeply excited, but he was thinking the matter over as quietly and calmly as he could.

"Gus," he said at last, "I think this man Harway has been trying to make a fool of you. Poor Mamie was drowned years ago, for if she had not been she would have written to me long before now. She knew I was in Montreal ; and it is not likely she would be in the same city with me and not try to find me. I have not a

very high opinion of Harry Griffith's character; and he might, very possibly, have tried to deceive me, but Mamie never would."

"But suppose she thought you were dead; suppose Griffith told her so?" said Mr. Fowler, halfdoubtfully. "He might have done it, you know."

Mr. Morton paused for some time before replying; he was thinking over the strange intelligence he had heard, and when he spoke it was in a hard unnatural voice, quite unlike his own.

"You may be right, Gus; perhaps you are; Mamie may be alive—oh, God grant that she is,—but I scarcely think she can be. I don't feel it, somehow; I don't feel as if Harry Griffith could have played so mean a part towards me. Why man," he continued, "I was his old school mate; we were boys together—of course, I objected to his marrying Mamie, because I always thought he would turn out bad; but, such a devilish scheme as this I would be sorry to credit him with. And Annie too——," he stopped suddenly, and a hard cold look totally unlike his usual aspect seemed to come over his face.

"Gus," he said after a while, "if Harry Griffith has done this thing to me; if he has stolen my sister; stolen my friendship; stolen my love; played me false everyway, while I have played him true, I will hunt him down, I'll hound him to death—I could kill him now without one particle of remorse, and I'll do it, if this story proves true."

The man's whole nature seemed to have changed in the few seconds which had elapsed since Fowler told him the story he had heard from Mr. Harway. Morton had at first listened quietly, and with a gentlemanly smile of disbelief on his lips. He had said nothing; and he had only regarded the tale as some idle fancy of Fowler's, or a story which some designing person had told Fowler with the ultimate design of making money out of it; but as the possibility of the truth flashed on him, all the latent strength and force of his nature was called into life, and he rose to leave the room, fully prepared to wring the truth from the doctor, if it cost the life of one or both in doing so.

"Hold on, old fellow; where are you off to?" said Mr. Fowler, endeavoring to detain his companion. "You didn't put your hat on, and you might catch cold in the nose or some such thing."

"Gus, I must see Harry at once. I can tell in one second after I ask him 'where is Mamie,' whether the story you have heard is true or not. Come with me; perhaps, it may be as well for

both he and I that there should be a witness to our interview, it may end fatally for one."

"Look here," said Mr. Fowler, catching Morton by the arm, and placing his own back against the door, "this sort of thing won't do at all, Charlie; no case of 'coffee for one, pistols for two,' where I am concerned. No sir. If you want a little of the manly art, I don't mind holding the sponge for you, and wiping your mouth out with a drop of vinegar when you can scarcely come to time, but, none of this blood and thunder business shall go on while I stand around. As soon as you get sane I shall be happy to go up with you, and we'll interview the doctor together. I don't mind trying to hang him in a square sort of way, you know; but I won't have any unfair business while I am around; so you must promise me, Charlie,—I can trust to your word—that there shall be no violence, or you shall not go to see him to-night."

Mr. Morton laughed a little at this outburst of his friend's, and his ill-humor seemed to pass away in a moment.

"Gus, old fellow, you need not be at all alarmed," he said. "I shall not make this a desperate case; come with me, if only to convince you how mild and amiable I can be."

"Charlie," responded Mr. Fowler, moving from the door, and extending his hand, "put it there! You're a brick, that's what you are, and I'll see you through this business as long as I have a leg to stand on; and if the doctor's head wants punching we'll do it together, old fellow, and I'll introduce him to a few of the dodges I learnt from Joe Coburn, while I was in New York."

The pair departed arm-in-arm for Dr. Griffith's office, and Morton tried hard to be merry and jolly as they went along. But the effort was a severe one; the strong feeling which had been raised within him by the story he had heard could not be easily controlled, and Mr. Fowler, noticing his companion's excitement, was making mental bets with himself as to the probability of the doctor's head being "punched" as soon as Morton met him.

The meeting, however, was not destined to take place. On reaching Dr. Griffith's office they were informed by the servant that the doctor had left town and would not return for two or three weeks.

"Where has he gone?" asked Morton.

"I don't know exactly, sir; but I think it must be somewhere west, as I heard him say he had to catch the eight o'clock train."

Mr. Morton looked at his watch. It is no use trying to catch

him at the depot now as it was already past eight, and the train had started.

"Gus," he said, "I don't know what to do; whether I ought to follow Harry, or wait quietly until his return. What do you think?"

"I think it's no use trying to think about it to-night. You can't follow him now, for you don't know where he has gone, and even if you did there is no train now to go by. Wait until to-morrow, old fellow; sleep over it, and perhaps some bright inspiration might come to you in your dreams."

To tell the truth Fowler was rather glad that the doctor was absent, for he feared the consequences of a meeting with Morton in the humor that gentleman was in. "Better give Charlie a chance to cool off," was Mr. Fowler's mental soliloquy, "it can't do him much harm to wait until to-morrow."

Morton turned impatiently away, and walked rapidly down the hill in silence. Mr. Fowler was a good walker, but he found some difficulty in keeping up with his companion, and he felt very much as if he was in for a walking match; still he said nothing until they had descended the hill and were turning into St James street, when Mr. Morton suddenly stopped and said:

"Gus, I have thought it over. I'll put this matter into the hands of a detective. I have great faith in detectives, they are wonderful fellows for finding out things. I'll set Murphy or Cullen to work to-morrow morning, and I'll soon know whether there is any truth in Mr. Harway's story or not."

"That's right, old boy, let the matter rest until to-morrow; and, as you've nothing special to do to-night, come up to my room and smoke a quiet pipe; perhaps Frank may be able to give us an idea, he's a wonderful fellow for ideas although his head is always so full of hip bones, and all that sort of thing."

He linked his arm through Mr. Morton's, and they strolled up St. James street, towards Mr. Fowler's boarding house.

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#### SCENE IV.

Miss Howson set about her arrangements for her elopement in a more business-like manner than would, generally, have been expected from a girl of her temper and disposition.

She had given up all hope of gaining her father's consent to her marriage with Dr. Griffith ; she knew him well enough to know that once he had "put his foot down," as he expressed it, it required considerable power to get that foot up again ; but she knew also his natural kindness of heart, and, she wisely concluded that, although he would not consent to her marrying the doctor, she would most probably be forgiven if she ran away without leave, and asked forgiveness afterwards.

She did not try the plan Dr. Griffith proposed ; she was a little bit afraid of Miss Moxton, and, therefore, did not like to give her the slightest opportunity of being able to interfere with the elopement. She had a sort of undefined idea that her aunt might catch her at the depot at the last moment, and spoil all her hopes by causing her arrest, or the doctor's arrest, the train's arrest, or somebody's arrest, and so prevent the consummation of her hopes.

She was not at all clear about this arresting business ; but, she had got it in her head, somehow, that any two persons trying to elope, may be arrested by any person who pleased to do so. She could not exactly settle in her mind whether it was burglary or manslaughter she could be arrested for ; but she settled it definitely that they should not be arrested at all.

She laid a very careful plot. In the first place, she took an opportunity, after breakfast, to see her father ; and, with one small effort to influence his consent to her marriage, appeared to acquiesce in his desire.

Next she confined her plans to Julia—who entered into them warmly—and then the two sisters went out to make a call.

Now, amongst Miss Howson's most intimate friends was a Mrs. Sloper, an old schoolmate who had sloped off with Sloper about two years ago ; and who, having been forgiven by her father, had been impressed with the idea that eloping was a very fine thing.

To Mrs. Sloper Miss Howson and Julia went, and she was told of Mr. Howson's objection to Annie's marrying the doctor, and the determination of both parties most intimately concerned to elope ; and her kind offices were solicited.

"My dear child" said Mrs. Sloper, "I have not heard of anything so delightful since I ran away with dear Frank,—and a terrible time I had. You know how mother went on about my marrying him, and how she persuaded father to order him out of the house. I did not care so much for him, but I did not like the way mother went on about it, and so I determined to have him

at any price. But mother was too smart for me for a while. Twice she spoiled our plans by going out with me when I wanted to go out alone, so that I could meet Frank, and we could be off, until I began to suspect that John, the coachman—who carried my letters to Frank and brought me his in return—was playing us both false. And so it proved to be; the mean old thing used to open both letters and read them, and then tell mother the contents. He was making money by it, for, of course Frank and I both paid him, and mother also gave him money, so, he liked it very well.

“When I was sure he was playing me false I did not know what to do; but, at last, I thought of Bridget, the cook, who had always been very kind to me, and I determined to confide in her.

“‘Shure am’ faith,’ she said, ‘ye’s needn’t want any favors of that nasty old John. I’ll fix it all right for ye, honey. You jist write a note to Misther Frank, tilling him to meet ye at the corner the night afther to-morrow, and I’ll show ye how to git off without any body suspectin’ ye.’

“And then she advised me to try a disguise. Oh, girls, you ought to have seen me after I had put on\* a suit of Bridget’s clothes, and blacked my face, and had on a pair of father’s cast-off boots, and wore a wig of curled horse hair! I was a sight.”

The recollection of the “sight” seemed to come so vividly before Mrs. Sloper that she threw herself back in her chair and laughed heartily. At last she continued:

“I dressed in the kitchen, and, just as I had finished, mother came down stairs. I was frightened I can tell you; but I was determined to get away if possible, so I faced her out. She looked at me suspiciously when she entered, and asked Bridget who I was. Bridget answered at once that I was a friend of hers, one who had been kind to her in the South, and that seemed to satisfy her. ‘Bridget,’ she asked, ‘have you seen Jennie within half an hour? She is not up in her room, and I can’t find her anywhere.’

“Bridget hesitated for a moment, and then answered, ‘Shure, mum, I never goes up to her room, an’ she sildim comes doun here, an’ how could I tell ye where she is?’

“My mother appeared satisfied with this rather ambiguous answer; and I went out the back way, as soon as possible. I met Frank; we got married; father and mother forgave us, when they found they could not unmarry us; and you know how happy we have been together. So,” concluded Mrs. Sloper, “I advise Annie

to black her face, and walk out of the house without any one recognising her."

"No," replied Miss Howson, decidedly, "I won't black my face to please any one; but I think I can manage without that, only I want you to help me. I want you to ask Julia and I to dine here to-day. To write a letter, I mean, so that I can show it to auntie, and prevent any suspicion. Then Harry can call for me about seven, and the four of us, you, Harry, Julia and I, can go to Dr. Bellowhard, and there will be no more trouble; and Harry and I can take the train for Niagara to-night. In your note say 'come early,' and I will tell auntie to send the carriage for us at half-past nine, and you can give the coachman a note I will write to papa."

Mrs. Sloper immediately agreed to the plan, and wrote the required note, which was shortly afterwards delivered at Mr. Howson's residence.

The doctor was duly notified of the plan and arrived at Mrs. Sloper's residence shortly after seven. He and the three ladies immediately proceeded to the residence of the Rev. Dr. Bellowhard, and in a few minutes Dr. Griffith and Miss Howson were declared man and wife.

Mrs. Sloper and Julia left the newly married couple to proceed to the depot alone, and returned to Mrs. Sloper's residence to await the arrival of the carriage which would only have one occupant instead of two. Annie had written the letter to her father and entrusted it to Julia, but that young lady felt uncommonly uncomfortable as she drove home alone, thinking of the possibility of her father's anger descending on her head.

The station was crowded when the doctor and his young wife arrived; but they met no one they recognized.

Tickets and a state-room in the Pullman had been previously secured, and no time was lost in reaching the car as the conductor's warning voice was already crying "All Aboard," and the last bell was ringing.

The doctor was assisting his wife up the steps of the car, when a gentleman, running out very hastily, struck her and almost threw her back into her husband's arms.

"Excuse me, miss," he exclaimed. "'Pon my word, you know, I'm quite ashamed of my carelessness; can't see a yard before me without my glass, you know—why," he continued, after he had succeeded in fixing a diminutive eye-glass in his left eye and looked through it spy-glass fashion, "I declare it's Miss Howson; I'm

awfully glad to see you, you know, and ever so sorry that I was awkward enough to run against you, don't you see. Are you going away, or only, like me, come to see some friends off?" and Mr. Theophilus Launcelot Polydor Johnson took off his hat and bowed very low.

That fear about anybody being able to arrest her while running away returned to the young bride now; but she felt braver with her husband by her side, and she answered promptly:

"My husband and I are about to start on our wedding trip to Niagara. Will you be kind enough to let me pass into the car, the train will start in a minute."

"Your who?" exclaimed Mr. Johnson in astonishment.

"My husband, Dr. Griffith. Please let me pass."

"Oh certainly, pray excuse me." He got off the step and the doctor assisted his wife into the car. The two men glared at each other for a moment, but neither spoke. In another minute the train was steaming out of the depot, and Mr. Johnson was left standing alone, gazing at the departing cars through his eye-glass, which was stuck so firmly in his left eye that it seemed as if it would never come out again.

"Here's a go, you know," he said after awhile, addressing nobody in particular, and still looking at the red light of the fleeting train; "it must be a go, don't you see, I can't make it out exactly; but I'll see about it."

He proceeded to see about it immediately by leaving the depot and walking towards St. James street.

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## SCENE V.

MR. JOHNSON stopped on the way and purchased a cigar; he was not a man capable of any great amount of very hard thinking, but he had an idea that he always thought better while smoking than at any other time.

He felt pretty certain that he had just witnessed an elopement; but could not exactly make up his mind what action he ought to take in the matter. Although a fool he was a gentleman, and it seemed to him that it was scarcely fair that he, an admirer of Miss Howson's, should turn informer on her when she had shown so decided a preference for another as to marry him. And then

he thought that if she was really married—which he did not doubt—it could be of no advantage to him to have the runaways stopped; but another consideration rose before him, and that was his duty to the “old boy,” as he mentally termed Mr. Howson; and whether it should be honorable in him to keep the knowledge of Annie’s elopement a secret from her father.

“It’s an awful puzzle, you know,” thought Mr. Johnson; “it’s a brick wall I can’t find a hole in to peep through, don’t you see. I must ask somebody about it; perhaps it would be as well to ask Gus, he is an awfully clever fellow for getting himself and other people out of scrapes; and he might see a way out of this which I can’t. Yes,” he added, after a few contemplative puffs at his cigar which seemed to inspire him, “yes, I’ll tell Gus, and hear what he says about it.”

When Mr. Johnson reached Mr. Fowler’s lodgings, he found that gentleman in close conference with Morton and Farron. They were talking very earnestly together when he entered the room, but stopped their conversation as soon as they saw him, so that a momentary pause ensued.

“Halloa, Polly!” exclaimed Mr. Fowler, breaking the silence, how are you? Sit down and have a pipe. I’m ever so glad to see you.”

Mr. Fowler, however, did not look at all glad; on the contrary he seemed annoyed, and looked very much as if he wished Mr. Johnson at the bottom of the Red Sea, in company with Pharaoh and all his host, or anywhere but where he was.

Mr. Johnson did not take the chair Mr. Fowler kicked towards him, but after speaking to Farron and bowing to Morton said, “Gus, I want to see you about some private business; can you come outside for five minutes?”

“All right,” replied Mr. Fowler looking very much as if he thought it was all wrong; and taking his hat he moved towards the door, after saying to the others, “wait for me, I won’t be long.”

“What is the matter, old fellow?” he said when they had gained the landing.

“I’m in a muddle, don’t you see, and I want a bit of advice from you, you know.”

“Well, go on; we can talk here just as well as in the street, and I want to go out with Frank and Charlie as soon as possible. No one can hear us here; what is it?”

Mr. Johnson told his adventure as briefly as possible, and the

doubt he was in as to what he ought to do, and was very much astonished at Mr. Fowler's suddenly seizing him by the arm and pulling him back into the room they had just quitted.

"It is all right," shouted Mr. Fowler, greatly excited. "I know where the doctor is; he has eloped with Annie Howson, and they are on their way to Niagara Falls; Polly saw them at the depot, and Annie told him they were married, and where they were going."

"What?" exclaimed both his hearers. "Eloped."

"Yes," said Mr. Johnson, "that is, you know, they were going away together, don't you see, and Annie said she was married you know, and I am in a fix as to whether I ought to tell the 'old boy,' don't you see."

There was dead silence in the room for a few seconds, which was broken at last by Morton, but his voice sounded so hard and unnatural that Fowler and Farron involuntarily started as they heard it. He was trying hard to keep cool and hide his emotion, but his face was very pale, his eyes glared fiercely, and his lips twitched convulsively as he spoke.

"I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Johnson," he said; "but as an old and trusted friend of Mr. Howson's I will save you the trouble of telling the 'old boy,' by informing him myself. I can't go down to the Police Station with you just now, boys," he continued to Fowler and Farron, "that matter must rest until tomorrow morning. I must see Mr. Howson at once. Give me my hat, boys."

He rose to go, and Fowler and Farron exchanged glances to know whether it would not be better for one or both of them to go with him, but before either of them had time to rise there was a knock at the door, and, in answer to Mr. Farron's cry, "come in," Mr. Boggs entered the room.

"Good evening, gents all," he said giving a sort of general bow, "hi 'opes hi sees you well."

"Wait a moment, Charlie," called Mr. Fowler, as Morton moved toward the door, "I'm going out, and I'll walk a little way with you."

"Make haste, then; I feel as if I was on fire."

Mr. Fowler did not make quite so much haste, however, as was expected of him, for the simple reason that he could not find his hat which had fallen off when he dragged Mr. Johnson into the room, and was quietly reposing at the foot of the stairs while

Mr. Fowler was searching under the bed, and in every likely and unlikely place for it.

"Hi 'ave got what you wanted, Mr. Farron," said Mr. Boggs, advancing into the room, and speaking confidentially, "hand hits ha beauty."

"All right," replied Farron, who had lost all interest in hip bones for the present. "Call to-morrow and I will settle with you; I am busy now."

"Hall right, yer 'onor," replied Mr. Boggs, backing towards the door. "You'll find it a beauty, sir. Poor lady, so pretty-looking, too, hand she just 'ad a baby. The baby's there, too, has I thought hi might as well bring hit along."

"Where did you get it, Boggs?" inquired Mr. Fowler, who, after an unsuccessful dive under the bed for what he thought was his hat but found to be a boot, had just reappeared, looking very hot and dusty."

"Hat Longueuil, gents both."

"Longueuil!"

The word fell like an echo from the lips of both students at once, and they looked into each other's faces with an expression half astonishment, half fear.

"When?" asked Farron.

"Last night, gents both. Hi took hit hup to the college this morning, nice hand tidy done hup has a sack of potatoes, hand I should 'ave come round sooner but my hold woman was took with a sickness which hadded one to the male population, and hi 'opes it will make 'er 'appy."

"Come on, Gus, what are you so long about?" said Morton, turning from the window where he had been standing gazing with a vague, far-off look into the street.

"Don't be in a hurry, Charlie," said Farron. "Sit down a minute; there may be something of more importance to attend to than seeing Mr. Howson a few minutes sooner or later. This man was engaged by me to procure a subject, he tells me he has got a mother and a little baby from Longueuil; perhaps——"

He said no more, for Morton's face told him he understood all that "perhaps" might mean.

"I see it Frank," he said, after a pause. "I can satisfy all my doubts at once. Let me once look on this corpse, and if it proves to be a stranger it will tend to allay my anxiety; if it should be Mamie——"

He said no more, but a hard, stern look stole over his face, and he clenched his hands until the nails almost pierced the flesh.

“Let us go,” he exclaimed presently. “I am all on fire until I know the truth,” and he took Farron’s arm and left the room.

“Yes, let us go,” echoed Mr. Fowler who had a misty sort of idea that the greater number of people went the better, and he clapped Mr. Johnson’s hat on that astonished gentleman’s head, and hurried him out of the room as hastily as he had a short while before ushered him into it. Indeed so great was Mr. Fowler’s haste that he quite forgot he had no hat on, and would most undoubtedly have gone bareheaded had he not, fortunately, stumbled over the one he had dropped at the foot of the stairs.

“But, here, hold on, look here, old fellow, where are you going to, you know,” said Mr. Johnson who, of course, had not understood the dialogue about the body which Mr. Boggs had exhumed, “You can’t go to Niagara to-night, don’t you see?”

“Niagara! Who wants to go to Niagara?”

“Then where are you going?”

“To the college.”

“No, thank you. I went into the dissecting room once with Frank, you know, and the fellows played tricks on me, don’t you see; put a piece of liver in my pocket, pelted bits of ‘meat,’ as they called it, at me, and gave me nasty bones to smell, you know. No, I don’t like a dissecting room.”

But his protest was unavailing, for Mr. Fowler had hurried him along so rapidly that they were already at the college and the four young men ascended the steps together.

Mr. Boggs did not leave quite so hastily. As soon as he was satisfied that they were out of the house, he went to the closet in which he remembered having seen Mr. Fowler deposit the black bottle on a former occasion; and, having found it, took a pretty good drink. He sighed, helped himself again, then replaced the bottle and glass, wiped his lips with his coat sleeve, and said, as he left the room :

“Hi know they’d ‘ave hasked me hif they ’ad remained, for they know hi ’ave ha ’appy ’art. I wonder,” he continued as he went down the street, “what it was has made them bolt hoff so suddenly? Hi ’opes has ’ow ’taint nothing wrong habout my subject, has hit might ’urt the hold woman hif hi was took up. Hit his ha bad time to worrit a woman when there ’as been ha hincrease to the census. Hi a’most wish hi ’adn’t been hin this job; but hit’s

so 'andy to 'ave ha few hextra dollars when one expects ha hincrease that hi couldn't withstand the temptation."

He returned contemplatively to the stand and resumed control of his horse and cab, which had been cared for during his absence by a brother Jehu.

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Mr. Farron led the way direct to the dissecting-room, and left his companions there.

"Wait a minute, Charlie," he said, "and I'll go down stairs and see about it."

Morton leaned against one of the heavy oak tables and looked about him in a listless sort of way. The scene was not new to him, and, had it been, he would scarcely have paid any attention to it. Some fifteen or twenty students were working away at various parts of the human body which had been taken from the different subjects under dissection ; most of them were smoking, and occasionally a light jest or a snatch of a song might be heard. On a table at the furthest end of the room was a body at which a solitary student was at work ; it had not been dismembered yet, and he was opening the body to remove the intestines, etc. ; from time to time he took out portions and laid them beside him.

It seemed an eternity to Mr. Morton before Farron returned ; yet it was only a few minutes before he re-entered the room and said :

"It is up here, Charlie ; now don't get excited, it may be all a false alarm, but if it isn't we will know in a minute. Here, boys," he continued, turning to his brother students, "which is the last body sent up ; that of a woman ? "

"It's over there in the corner," replied one of the students, who was scraping away very industriously at a leg bone ; "Billy is at work on it ; he's practising post-mortem examination."

"It's mighty queer," said the party mentioned as Billy, "I can't see through it at all."

"What is the matter, Billy ?" inquired Mr. Farron, approaching the table.

"The heart won't come out. I've got it now," and giving a good pull, he brought out the organ. The moment his eye fell on it he changed color, and, hastily passing it to his left hand, he took hold of something which appeared to be sticking in it, and drew it out.

It was a long slender rod of glittering steel, with a finely sharp-

ened point, which he held up to the light, as he cried in a voice of terror :

“ Great God, boys, this woman has been murdered ! ”

“ Murdered ! ”

Every student started from his work, the jest remained unfinished, the song died on the lips where it was to have been born, every voice was hushed as they gazed with startled eyes on the fatal evidence held up before them ; the trickling of a few drops of blood to the zinc floor and the rumbling of a passing cart fell with terrible distinctness on the excited nerves of the horror-stricken group. The presence of death they did not mind, but to stand face to face with a foul crime, discovered by one of themselves, was a new experience to these embryo doctors.

“ Stand aside ; let me see it.” Was it the voice of a man or of some tortured spirit that spoke ? Was it the face of a man, or of a ghost, which met their gaze as they turned towards whence the sound proceeded ?

Charlie Morton had started from the table against which he had been leaning at the sound of that word “ murdered,” and was advancing toward the table on which the body lay. His face was as livid as those of the corpses around him, and his eyes blazed with almost a maniac glare ; he clutched at his collar as if it choked him, and, although he looked straight before him, he walked like one in a dream. He saw but one thing in that whole room, the still white form lying mangled on the table at the far end of the room ; he heard but one word, that one word “ murdered.”

The students stood respectfully aside to let him advance ; they had been startled, shocked, astonished at the discovery Billy had made, but they felt now that that was only the first act of a terrible drama which was about to be enacted, and that one of the principal actors now stood before them.

Morton advanced slowly to the table and looked down at the form lying on it.

One glance was sufficient ; all his worst fears were realized ; all doubt was at an end ; all hope was fled.

The body was that of his sister.

The form was torn and mangled by the dissecting-knife ; the face was pallid with the impress of death ; the light blue eyes were closed forever ; the ruby lips were blue from the touch of the destroyer ; years, sorrows, pain, suffering had left their traces in the hollow cheeks, sunken eyes and dented lines ; but the heart that loved that form so well in years gone by knew it in an in-

stant; knew it, aye, would have known it even if he had not half hoped, half feared to find it there. The face was calm, there was almost a smile on it, no sign of pain at dissolution ; the murderer had, at least, been merciful enough to make her death swift and sudden.

He stood for some seconds gazing silently at the inanimate form, then stooped over it and pressed his lips to the cold rigid ones of the corpse.

“ My darling,” he said, kneeling on the bloody zinc floor, and, throwing his arms around the corpse, he drew the head up to his shoulder and fondly kissed the lips and forehead ‘ ‘ my darling, that I have mourned for six years as dead, to find you thus cruelly murdered, to know that I have been betrayed, deceived, and that your life has been made the penalty of gratifying that man’s passion ; it is hard, very hard, to bear ; but you shall not go unavenged to your grave ; here, by your dead body, I swear to hunt Harry Griffith to death, to have his life for yours ; if there is any law in Canada he shall die the death of a dog, and, if the law will not do me justice, then I will take the law into my own hands, and kill him as I would any wild beast.”

He dropped his head on the cold dead face and remained silent for some time.

Mr. Fowler had meanwhile got a sheet from the janitor’s wife and thrown it over the remains ; most of the students had quietly left the room at a signal from Farron, and he was explaining the state of affairs to them outside. Only Fowler, Johnson and a couple of students who had more curiosity than politeness now remained.

Morton continued so long kneeling by his dead sister that Fowler feared he had fainted from excessive emotion, and at last approached him and placing his hand on his shoulder said :

“ Charlie, old fellow, this sort of thing won’t do ; don’t break down now when you require all your energy and coolness to bring this rascal to justice. You don’t need me to tell you, old fellow, how deeply I feel for you, you know it ; and you know that I will help you, if my help can do any good, in hanging the doctor.”

He put his arm round Morton’s shoulder and tried to raise him from the ground ; at first he did not succeed, but after a short while Morton rose to his feet and held his hand out to Fowler.

The two men clasped hands, with a warm close grip, and looked into each other’s faces. No words were spoken, but actions and looks are frequently more expressive than words.

Fowler was young, volatile, rather too fond of a spree and not of any great depth of character ; but he was greatly attached to Charlie Morton, and his heart was weeping for his friend although there were no tears in his eyes.

“ Come,” he said, “ come, old fellow, we must go about this matter at once. Don’t break down now, we have a tough fight before us. You may depend on it that rascal Griffith has left very few tracks behind him, he is too clever for that. We may have trouble to prove that he committed the murder, although there is no doubt in our minds that he did. You know his favorite saying he is ‘ hard to beat ? ’ ”

“ Yes, yes, I know,” responded Mr. Morton, rousing himself with an effort, “ he says he is hard to beat, but murder and falsehood and cowardice and baseness are never hard to beat where truth and honesty and manliness are arrayed against them. Hard to beat,” he continued savagely, “ yes : we’ll see who is hard to beat. He has robbed my life of all its sweetness, he has found it easy to triumph over me with his plots and schemes ; perhaps, he’ll find at the last I am harder to beat than he thinks.”

By this time Mr. Farron had partially explained the case to the astonished students, and he now re-entered the room accompanied by some of them.

Mr. Farron was a very clear-headed, practical sort of young man, and, although greatly excited, he managed to keep pretty cool.

“ Look here, Charlie,” he said, “ you must get out of this as soon as possible ; we are only losing time. The body must remain here for the present, Billy will look after it and Gus will notify the Coroner—of course, there must be an inquest—while you and I will go down to the Police Station and consult the detectives, if there are any there now. I believe one is always on duty at night, but I am not sure.”

“ I am,” said Mr. Fowler, “ I saw Cullen there last night when I—well, when I had business there,” he added suddenly remembering that he did not want his companions to know where he had spent the previous night.

“ All right, Gus, you go at once to the Coroner, he lives somewhere in St. Denis street ; you can find the number in the directory ; get him to come here to-night, if possible, and hold an inquest early to-morrow morning. Hurry up now, take a cab ; take Boggs if you can find him on the stand, and find out where

he lives, so that we can have him summoned ; but, don't let him have the least idea that he will be wanted, or he'll run away."

"Not a foot shall he run if I have to tie him," replied Mr. Fowler as he left the room.

It was wonderful how Farron, actuated by pure friendship, had suddenly taken the lead, and, while Morton was dreaming of some indefinite plan of vengeance, put in motion the machinery of the law, which was almost sure to hunt the doctor down. Oh ! a very practical man was Mr. Farron, and destined, perhaps at some future day to become a star in the medical firmament, for he had presence of mind, promptness, coolness, courage, patience and knowledge on his side ; and, only add experience to those and it does not need much more to make a good doctor.

Morton was half heart-broken, and had only a vague undefined idea of hunting the doctor down ; Farron was all coolness and determination ; he knew how to accomplish his end and he meant to do it. "Don't any of you touch the body," he said as he took Morton's arm to leave the room. "It must be left as it is until the Coroner has seen it. Billy, you remain here ; you made the discovery and you will be one of the principal witnesses. I saw you draw the needle out of the heart, and if you will look on the left breast you will find a small blue spot ; I know how the murder was done exactly, there are two well authenticated instances on record."

"I wonder if I could get a special train to-night," said Mr. Morton when they had reached the street.

"A special train ! what for ?"

"For me to go to Niagara."

"Go to Niagara, what an idea ! what good could you do ? Besides, you must remain here to attend the inquest. A detective will leave for Niagara by the first train to-morrow to watch the doctor, and the moment a verdict is given I will get the Chief to telegraph and have him arrested. There is no fear of his trying to run away ; he thinks he is quite safe, and has not the most distant idea that detection has followed so speedily after his crime. In what queer ways things do come about," he continued, beginning to philosophize, "if I hadn't have wanted a hip bone, it is most probable this murder would never have been discovered ; or, at all events not until some future generation began to build on the ground now used as a church-yard, and the wonderful discovery would have been made of a skeleton with a knitting needle driven through what had once been its heart."

"I must go to Niagara," said Morton, "not only that I want to be sure of Griffith's arrest, but——"

"Ah, yes; poor girl it will be a terrible thing for her."

"That's what cuts me. It seems so hard that in avenging the murder of my sister I should have to strike at the heart of the girl I love; but I can't help that, although it strikes into my own heart to cause her one moment's pain or sorrow."

There was but little more conversation until they reached the Police Station, where they found Murphy on duty, and were lucky enough to meet the Chief, who was out visiting the different Stations.

Their tale was soon told; the Chief and the keen-eyed, quiet-looking, detective listening with eagerness to the strange story of crime.

"I don't think there is a particle of doubt about the crime having been committed by him," said the Chief, when Farron had told all he knew of the case; "give me a description of him as near as you can, and I'll telegraph to Niagara at once to have him arrested on suspicion on his arrival. Murphy can go up for him to-morrow night to bring him down, while Cullen works up the case in Longueuil."

"No," said Morton, "I don't want him arrested until I am there. I want to have him watched so that he cannot escape, but I want to be there when he is arrested."

"Don't want him arrested?"

"No. You see his wife is an old friend of mine. Poor girl! it will be a terrible blow to her, and I would rather be there to help her when the arrest takes place."

"Well, it won't do any harm to telegraph to Niagara anyway. It is not likely he will get any warning, and of course he has no idea that his crime has been discovered. He thought once his victim was underground he was all safe, as he would have been as a general thing; and would have in this instance had it not been for that body-snatching carter. I must look after him."

"Charlie," said Mr. Farron, "it's no use your going to Niagara; you must stay here to look after the inquest, and funeral, and all sorts of things. Now, I'm not wanted and I will go in your place. I will look after Annie for you and tell her you sent me. That is the best plan, old fellow, and you had better let me follow it."

"Thanks, Frank; you are right. I never knew until to-night

how true a friend you were; God bless you and reward you for standing by me in the way you have. I can never forget it."

"Do you happen to have a photograph of him?" asked Murphy.

"No," replied Morton, "but I suppose I can get one easily enough."

"It might be useful," said the detective, "although I don't expect there will be much difficulty in identifying the parties."

"I've got a picture of his ugly mug," said Mr. Farron, "and you shall have it to-morrow morning. Come, Charlie, it is getting late and we have to see Mr. Howson yet. Nothing more can be done to-night, so there is no use wasting time here."

"Wait a moment," said the Chief, "you will be going near the telegraph office, would you mind sending this telegram to Niagara; he won't be there before to-morrow night, but there's nothing like having things prepared beforehand."

They proceeded to the college where Fowler had just arrived with the coroner; and, after an inspection of the body, it was covered with a sheet and left where it laid until the next morning. Morton insisted on remaining all night by his dead sister's body, and Farron, who would not leave his friend, shared his watch.

To Mr. Fowler was entrusted the task of hunting up an undertaker, and making arrangements for removing the body as soon as it had been viewed by the jury; while to Mr. Johnson was commissioned the task of informing Mr. Howson of his daughter's elopement, and the subsequent discovery of the murder.

Mr. Johnson was not in a very happy frame of mind; he had discovered when he left the dissecting room that—to use his own words to Mr. Fowler—"some fellow, you know, put somebody's shin-bone in my pocket, don't you see, and when I went to wipe my face I pulled it out with my pocket handkerchief, you know, and rubbed the nasty thing all over my face, you see."

He fulfilled his mission very creditably, however; but was much astonished at Mr. Howson's manner of receiving the intelligence. Of Annie's elopement he, of course, already knew, as he had received her letter and had also seen Julia; but the news of the discovery of the murder shocked him greatly. His anger against Annie for her disobedience was greatly increased, and he swore in the most solemn manner that he would never recognize her as a child of his again. His rage was terrible to see, and frightened Mr. Johnson so that that gentleman managed for once

in his life, to utter three consecutive sentences without a single "you know," or "don't you see."

At last Mr. Howson cooled down a little, and finally promised to go down to the college and see Morton, who was a great favorite of his, and offer to have arrangements made for the funeral taking place from his house; and then Mr. Johnson departed.

Mr. Howson went to the college as soon as Johnson had left, and spent a long time in deep and earnest talk with Morton, with whom he strongly sympathized; and the arrangements for the funeral were completed before he left.

Of Annie he said little, but that little was very bitter and severe. He would not listen to Morton's pleading on her behalf, and firmly declared he would never see her again.

All that long desolate night Morton sat by the side of the dead form he loved so dearly; silent, motionless, living his life over again. It seemed but as yesterday that he had played about St. Leonard's churchyard, a merry-hearted boy, climbing up on the scaffolding of the then uncompleted chapel, clambering, at the imminent risk of his neck, up the steep roof and standing in the holes in the spire made to receive the bells, while a trim little figure in white, with flowing black hair, looked in wonder and amazement out of her deep blue eyes at the feats "brother" was performing. Memory carried him back to that eventful evening when Harry Griffith had been brought, almost dead, to his door, and when Mamie had declared her love for him; and he almost wished that the negroes had left him to perish in the grave from which they had rescued him. Then came the thought of how he had heard of Mamie's death, and how he had mourned for her, and his heart grew hard and bitter against the man who had so outraged him. After that came the remembrance of his love for Annie Howson, and how Griffith had again come between him and happiness; and then came a crowd of other thoughts, tenderer, gentler thoughts of her he loved; and by the side of that cold, mangled corpse Charlie Morton fought out a long, stern, bitter fight with his two loves; between duty and love; between what he owed to the dead, and what to the living.

Great as was his sorrow over Mamie's wrongs, still greater was his grief at the thought of the pain and anguish about to fall on the one who was now more than ever all he cared for on earth. Long and deeply he thought, striving hard to find some way to shield her and punish his sister's murderer. But there was no

way. Farron's promptitude had already placed the case beyond his control ; it was now the property of the law, and he felt that the law must take its course. Willingly would he have given his own life to save Annie from pain and disgrace, but the sacrifice was not permitted him ; he could almost have wished the doctor to escape if that would have shielded her from the odium of being a murderer's wife, but it was too late for that now ; before another sun had set the story of the murder would be sent from end to end of the land, and fancy pictured to him how the newspapers would glory in the item, how they would embellish the article with "double headers," and "cross heads," and, perhaps, even a portrait of the murderer. It was impossible that Annie should not know her husband's guilt, even if he succeeded in evading the law.

Would she love him still ? That was a question which occurred to him again and again. Somehow, the man never thought that the death of the doctor might tend to promote his own happiness, by gaining him possession of the object of his affections. It never entered his mind that Annie's love diverted from the doctor might revert to him, he was too unselfish for that ; his own happiness had no part in his thoughts ; he loved Annie deeply and truly, and he cared only that she should be happy, he never for one moment gave any consideration to himself.

And what was to become of her ? That was another troublesome question over which he pondered deeply. Mr. Howson had spoken so strongly and bitterly about her, that Morton knew there was but little to be hoped for from that quarter, for some time at least. Where could she go ? What could she do ?

These were puzzling questions, and Mr. Morton thought and thought over them until the first faint flush of early morning came and found him still with the difficult problems unsolved ; and Mr. Farron fast asleep with his head resting on one of the heavy oak tables on which laid the book he had been reading, and which contained that very interesting hip-bone case which he had been looking over again when sleep overcame him.

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Mr. Fowler, having executed the commissions given him, returned to his boarding house. It was late, and Mr. Fowler was worn out, both in mind and body, but he did not retire to the bed which he was destined to occupy alone that night. Instead of doing so he went through a curious and remarkable pantomime,

which would have caused a spectator to imagine that he had lost his senses, and was a fit candidate for an apartment at Beauport.

In the first place he divested himself of his neck-tie, collar, coat and waistcoat ; then he tied his braces very tight round his waist, took off his cuffs and rolled his shirt sleeves up far above his elbows in two very hard, tight rolls ; then he took the bolster, doubled it in half and set it up on end at the head of the bed supported by a pillow on each side.

Great pains did he take to have it nicely adjusted, and properly balanced, and when it was arranged to his entire satisfaction he stood off, threw himself into a boxing attitude and began to spar in the most alarming manner. All kinds of wonderful feints, and guards, and passes did Mr. Fowler make ; and most tremendous blows did he bestow on the unoffending bolster, now with the right hand, now with the left ; straight from the shoulder, under cuts, overcuts, all kinds of cuts.

Every time he knocked the bolster down he would set it up again only to knock it down again ; with praiseworthy persistency worthy of a better cause he kept up this exercise for nearly half an hour. Now springing back, now dodging, now guarding and always ending by knocking down the bolster, you could plainly see that he was going through an imaginary fight, and doing so with great heartiness.

Was he mad ? No, Mr. Fowler was perfectly sane. Was he drunk ? No, he had taken only one drink during the whole evening. Was he merely exercising himself ? No, he was far too tired for that ; the fact is Mr. Fowler was in fancy carrying out the advice he had given Mr. Morton with regard to the doctor, and was mentally “punching his head.” And a terrible punching it would have got had it been in the place of the bolster which got pounded, and thumped, and shaken in a way no bolster had ever before been treated in Mrs. Grub’s boarding house. At last with one tremendous “back-hander,” he knocked it completely off the bed, almost overturned the wash-stand, and a cloud of feathers gave evidence that he had punched its head to some purpose, for he had split the tick, and the brains, *i. e.*, feathers, were coming out in large quantities.

This seemed to restore him to his senses, and he paused in his work of destruction, and re-arranged the bed.

“I wish it had been him,” he said, “I’d have enlarged and embellished his physiognomy to such an extent that all the pho-

tographers would have been trying to get pictures of him as a gorilla, or one of Darwin's 'missing links.' "

He slowly undressed, got into bed, and was soon in the land of dreams with the golden-haired object of his affection.

## ACT V.—THE WAGES OF SIN.

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### SCENE I.

#### SPENDING THE HONEYMOON.

IT is not my intention to enter into the particulars of the inquest which opened next morning and continued to sit for two days; suffice it to say that Cullen succeeded in finding the servant who had lived with Mrs. Griffith, and she testified that on the night of her mistress' death she had seen the doctor sitting at the centre table in the parlor, playing with a ball of worsted and a knitting needle; afterwards heard him go out into the yard, and heard the old grindstone which stood in one corner going; thought the doctor was sharpening his pen-knife; heard the doctor go into his wife's room, and did not hear any more until next morning when she was told her mistress was dead. There was no other man but Dr. Griffith slept in the house. The nurse who was attending Mrs. Griffith had been sent to bed by the doctor who said he would watch his wife for a few hours.

The rest of the evidence went principally to show the motive for the crime, and after two days' investigation the jury brought in a verdict of murder, and stated that in their opinion the murder had been committed by Dr. Griffith.

A warrant for his arrest was issued, and Farron and Murphy left for Niagara.

On the night of their departure the Chief received a telegram from Niagara which greatly annoyed him; the train on which Dr. Griffith and his wife had left had arrived, but neither of them were on board. This made him fear that the doctor had either received information of the discovery of the murder, or had wilfully misled Miss Howson as to their destination, so as to elude pursuit, if Mr. Howson should follow them. He telegraphed to various points and sent instructions to Murphy which he would receive on his arrival; but two days passed away and no information was

received ; it appeared as if the earth had quietly opened and swallowed Dr. Griffith and his wife.

\*     \*     \*     \*     \*

The mystery of Dr. Griffith's disappearance is very easily explained. He had not gone to Niagara and never intended to go, although he had told Miss Howson they would go there and had bought tickets for that place ; but he had only gone as far as Prescott where he had remained over night, crossed to Ogdensburg next morning, and, doubling back to Rouses Point, took the Champlain steamers for Whitehall, and from thence went to Saratoga, which he had always intended to make the limit of his journey.

Very happy and pleasant were the three days it took to perform the journey, and very happy and pleasant were the three days the newly married couple passed at the far-famed watering place ; it was late in the season, the races were over and the hotels not more than half full ; but Congress Hall and the Union are so large that when only half full they contain the population of a fair-sized flourishing village.

But even had the hotel been empty they would not have cared ; they were all in all to each other, and did not want to make acquaintances. They preferred driving out to the lake together and being rowed over its calm surface, and a stroll through the quiet streets in the evening was more acceptable than the glare and glitter of the handsome parlors. So time slipped quietly away ; and, as Dr. Griffith seldom spoke to any one, and did not read the New York papers, he remained perfectly oblivious to the fact of his being accused of murder and being searched for everywhere.

As for Annie she was as perfectly happy and contented as any young lady can be at Saratoga, if she happens to have eloped and forgotten to take ten or twelve trunks with her. Indeed she constantly declared she was "not fit to be seen," but for once in her life it did not seem to annoy her that she could not dress as well and expensively as her neighbors. She was too happy to mind such trifles, too happy in her new love, too happy to be with him on whom she had centred all her affection. Her heart had gone out to the man who had deceived her, and she felt perfectly happy and contented with him.

She wrote to her father as soon as she arrived at Saratoga, telling him where she was, and asking his forgiveness for the rash step she had taken.

When Mr. Howson received the letter he at once called on Charlie Morton and showed it to him :

"There's your murderer," said he, "go and catch him ; or telegraph and have him arrested."

"But Annie ?" replied Morton, "what is to become of her ?"

"I don't know ; and I don't care very much," replied Mr. Howson. "If she has pleased to marry a murderer she must abide by her choice. I will not have anything further to do with her."

"But I will," hotly replied Mr. Morton. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself not to have more feeling for your own daughter."

"She is no daughter of mine, now," replied Mr. Howson. "Her disobedience has brought disgrace on me and mine, and the bed she has made for herself she must lie in. I don't want to be too harsh with her, and won't let her starve or go on the street for a living, but I won't have anything to do with her."

Mr. Morton knew it was useless to argue with him then, so he wisely let the matter drop.

The next morning Morton and Murphy started for Saratoga, and arrived there the same evening.

It was a bright, warm evening and Mrs. Griffith was seated at the window of her bedroom enjoying what little breeze there was, and the doctor was in the adjoining sitting-room writing a letter.

There was a knock at the door, and, in answer to the doctor's "come in," Mr. Morton entered accompanied by Murphy and a local officer, whose services had been engaged by Murphy to make the arrest.

Morton and Griffith looked into each other's eyes, but neither spoke. The doctor gazed at that stern, calm face and felt that the secret of the false part he had played was known to Morton ; but he cared nothing for that now, he little thought that the dead had been brought as evidence against him.

"That is the man," said Morton, pointing to him, and the local officer advanced and put his hand on his shoulder :

"I arrest you in the name of the law, for the murder of your wife Mary Griffith, at Longueuil, Canada, on 7th inst. You are my prisoner."

Discovered ! All his plans, all his schemes, all his sin for no purpose. Discovered ! and discovery meant death, and a shameful death at that. All the force of the evidence against him, all

the certainty of his being hung, flashed through his mind in a moment; and Morton would triumph over him at last, and perhaps console himself with Annie, after the gallows had done its work. That should never be; he would sacrifice two more lives rather than that should happen.

All this had passed through his mind in an instant, while he was standing by the chair from which he had risen on the entrance of his unwelcome visitors; in another instant he had put his hand behind him, drawn a small silver mounted revolver which he always carried, and aimed directly at Morton's head.

But Charlie Morton's time had not yet come. Never from the moment of his entering the room had Murphy removed his glance from the doctor, and the lynx-eyed detective saw the rapid motion with which the pistol was drawn, and sprang forward in time to throw up Griffith's hand, and the bullet buried itself harmlessly in the frescoing of the room.

The doctor turned savagely on the detective, and a fierce struggle for the possession of the pistol ensued; but Murphy, although not a particularly strong man, has a grip like a vice, and he held on until the local officer interfered, and in a few seconds the doctor was securely handcuffed.

Simultaneously with the report of the pistol there rang out a piercing shriek, and then came a heavy fall in the adjoining apartment. Morton at once rushed into the room and found, as he expected, Annie lying senseless on the ground. It was the work of a moment to lift her in his strong arms and lay her gently on the sofa, and then he tried all the means he knew of to restore her to consciousness.

And what a consciousness! He thought of it bitterly, sadly, as he chafed her hands and threw water on her face; would it not be better for her if she never awoke from that death-like swoon; never returned to the world in which she was doomed to suffer so much in the future; never knew in this life the utter baseness of the man on whom she had placed her young affections, and who had brought such deep disgrace upon her?

He gazed at the pale still face, and ashy lips, and he almost hoped—much as he loved her—that she had been saved from all further pain and sorrow in this world.

It was many minutes before she showed any signs of returning consciousness, and the doctor had meanwhile been removed; but gradually a slight tinge of color showed itself on her cheeks,

slowly a few faint sighs escaped her, flutteringly the trembling eyelids opened, and she looked about her in a bewildered sort of way. Her gaze fell on Morton, and she looked at him half-wonderingly as if she doubted her senses in seeing him by her side.

“Charlie?” she said questioningly.

“Yes; lie still a little, Annie, you have not quite recovered.”

“Where is Harry,” she asked; then with a sudden exclamation as the remembrance of the cruel words she had heard came back to her, “Ah! they have taken him away; that man that said he had committed—no, I won’t say it; I won’t believe it; let me go to him;” she rose in her excitement and would have moved toward the door, but Morton gently restrained her.

“You cannot go just now, Annie; you are too weak and excited; when you recover I have something very serious to say to you.”

“Ah!” she exclaimed as another remembrance returned to her, “that pistol shot; tell me,—tell me,—she clutched his arm with one hand and pressed the other to her heart as she almost whispered the words, “is he dead?”

“No.”

“Thank God for that! Who was wicked enough to fire at him?”

“No one; don’t agitate yourself; I want you to recover your strength as fast as possible. I have something very terrible to tell you.”

“Terrible! Terrible! What do you mean? You cannot dare to insinuate that what I heard that man say is true? You know it is false.”

“It is true,” mournfully responded Mr. Morton. “Alas! only too true.”

“It is a base, wicked lie; this is some foul plot to separate him from me, and—you—you; it is you who have done this; you have concocted this dastardly scheme.” The woman’s manner was wild and excited now, and her eyes gleamed with anger and her face was flushed as scarlet as she approached Morton; but her manner suddenly changed, and she said in a sad sorrowful tone, “Oh! Charlie, Charlie, to think that you, whom I have known ever since I was a little girl, should have done this thing.”

“Good heavens, Annie, what can you mean. Do you think—Here,” he continued drawing a paper from his pocket, “you must know the truth, some time. I cannot tell you; read that.”

She took the paper from him and a violent spasm shook her

whole frame as she read the first words : "Murder.—A doctor kills his wife and elopes with another woman." She did not falter, however, but read on steadily to the end, and with distending eyes and horror blanching her lips and cheeks; read with the words seeming to burn themselves into her brain ; read with all the blood in her body feeling as if it had turned to ice and her head to fire ; read, with the room dancing around her, the story of her husband's guilt.

It was very accurately and substantially told, although it did have—as Mr. Morton had thought—a plentiful supply of "double heads," and "cross headings," and was written in rather florid style; but it was correct. Mr. Farron had seen that if he did not give the reporters a correct version of the whole affair they would hash up some kind of a story replete with—well, say, misstatements, I won't say lies, because newspapers never tell lies, everybody knows that ; and so he had told the whole story as he knew it ; and there it all was in print, even the story of her elopement, and she stood there and read it, read how the man she loved and honored had for years been a living lie ; how he had a wife living when he asked her to marry him ; how he had murdered that wife to gratify his wishes.

She read it slowly and carefully, omitting nothing, and Morton stood and wondered at her firmness ; but his wonder changed to grief and fear when she threw the paper from her with a loud laugh and turned her flashing eyes, in which the light of madness gleamed, full upon him.

"Ha, ha!" she laughed, "he killed her, killed her that he might marry me. I will go to him at once, he shall find I can be faithful to him even now," and she turned and threw herself on the sofa in a violent paroxysm of hysterics.

Mr. Morton rang the bell hastily, and three or four chambermaids who had been waiting suspiciously near the door wondering what that pistol shot meant, and what had caused the doctor's arrest, entered at once, and to them Morton resigned her while he went downstairs to obtain medical aid.

A doctor was soon found, and under his hands she shortly began to revive ; but no returning consciousness came with the revival, the light of reason had fled, and brain fever set in.

Mr. Morton sat all that long, dismal night by her bedside, watching with almost breathless intensity and listening to her incoherent, rambling utterances. Now she was a happy school girl again ;

now she laughed over some youthful frolic ; then she would revert with horror to the dreadful story she had just read, and repeat long paragraphs, for the words seemed to have branded themselves on her brain ; he sat and watched and wondered why his own brain did not give way under the strain which had been placed on it.

He had telegraphed to Mr. Howson as soon as the doctor had pronounced the attack brain fever, he had also sent a brief telegram to Miss Moxton informing her of her niece's condition, and now he could only watch and wait.

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I have already mentioned that there was no doubt about Miss Moxton's temper, and had there been it would have been dispelled had anyone seen her when the news of Annie's elopement reached her ; her first act was to box the ears of Miss Julia, who conveyed the information, which so enraged that young lady that she vowed never to speak to her aunt again ; then Miss Moxton indulged in a long tirade about "shameful proceedings," and "impudent hussies," and "the fast girls of the present day," and such like topics, and the way that flexible nose went up and down was wonderful to see. She fully shared Mr. Howson's resentment against Annie, and strongly advised him never to recognize her again.

But Miss Moxton was like a good many dogs whose bark is worse than their bite, and the news of the murder, following so close on that of the elopement, greatly cooled her anger. Annie's punishment had been so terrible, and had followed so quickly on her fault, that Miss Moxton felt her heart melting towards the poor sorrow-stricken girl she had raised almost from infancy, and she knew that Annie had only to come to her and ask for forgiveness to receive it.

But Annie did not come, and Miss Moxton's heart was getting hard again when Morton's telegram arrived, and it melted down in a moment.

It was late in the evening when the telegram arrived, but Mr. Howson had not yet gone to the Club and was seated in the library when Miss Moxton entered. A visit to that sanctum from that lady was a great novelty, and Mr. Howson was proportionally astonished.

"Is there anything wrong, Jane?" he asked—Jane was Miss Moxton's Christian name.

"Yes, there is something very wrong," responded Miss Moxton

promptly. "You and I have both been wrong, James, and the sooner we repair that wrong the better. Did you receive a telegram from Charlie?"

"Yes; the murdering doctor has been arrested, I am glad to say."

"And Annie is dying of brain fever."

"Not quite so bad as that, I think. Charlie says she is ill; an attack of nervousness, that's all."

"Nervous fiddlesticks!" exclaimed Miss Moxton with a violent elevation of the nose. "Can't you see that the shock has deranged the girl, and unless she is properly taken care of she will die amongst strangers or become a confirmed lunatic? She must be brought home at once."

"Not here; she has chosen her own path, let her follow it. I will furnish whatever money she may require. I will not see her starve or beg; but I never want to see her again."

"James Howson, you're a brute. When Annie ran away I was as incensed at her as you; but now she is ill, in trouble, in disgrace, and amongst strangers; thank heaven my heart is not made of stone," this was said with a toss of the head and an elevation of the nose which clearly indicated that Miss Moxton knew some one who was not so happily situated. "I shall go to Saratoga to-morrow and bring her home."

"Not to my house."

"Then it shall be to mine."

"Yours!"

"Yes, mine. You have forgotten, I suppose, that I have two thousand a year in my own right. I mean to take a house and have Annie live with me."

Mr. Howson looked at her in blank amazement. For fifteen years, since the death of his wife, Miss Moxton had presided over his establishment and filled the place of a mother to his children; for fifteen years his household affairs had been managed with an ability which he only too well appreciated, and the idea of attempting to continue housekeeping without Miss Moxton at the head of affairs seemed so hopeless to him that he sat looking at her in blank bewilderment.

"You can't be serious, Jane."

"I never was more serious in my life; if you have no feeling for your own daughter I have some for my sister's child, and I won't leave her to the cold charity of strangers while I have the

means of providing a roof to shelter her. Will you be kind enough to tell me when the first train starts for Saratoga?"

"Six o'clock to-morrow morning," he answered mechanically.

"Very well, I shall go by that train. If you come to your senses before I return, you can telegraph me to bring Annie here, otherwise I shall take her to a hotel until I can obtain a house," and Miss Moxton sailed majestically out of the room with her nose almost dislocated, it was so fearfully elevated.

The next morning Miss Moxton left for Saratoga, where she arrived the same night and found Annie still dangerously ill. Amongst her other accomplishments Miss Moxton was an excellent nurse, and she immediately installed herself in the parlor adjoining Annie's room and took that young lady under her special care.

Good nursing is scarcely less important than good medical treatment; but although Annie had the most constant and devoted care, and the best medical attendance which money lavishly spent could procure, it was three weeks before the light of reason once more shone in her eyes, and it was past the middle of November before she was strong enough to return to Montreal. She returned to her father's house, fully forgiven.

Mr. Howson had made a show of holding out, but one week's experimenting at keeping house without Miss Moxton to manage for him brought him to terms, besides he really loved Annie very dearly, and when his anger had had time to cool, he made up his mind that he had spoken and acted hastily, and, like a sensible man as he was, he owned his rashness; so, one fine morning Miss Julia was told to pack her trunks, the house was left in charge of the servants, and Mr. Howson and Julia started for Saratoga where they remained until Annie was strong enough to travel.

During all the time of Annie's illness Mr. Morton never left her; no brother could have been kinder or more affectionate, or more untiring in his efforts to be of service than he was. When she returned to consciousness it was he who devised all manner of contrivances to amuse and interest her; it was he who planned the short drives she was allowed to take—they never went out to the lake, as he had heard it was a favorite drive of the doctor's and he feared to awaken unpleasant memories. It was Morton who took her in his strong arms as he would a little baby and carried her down to the carriage; it was he who carefully wrapped her up, as the weather grew colder; it was he who was always by her side promoting her every wish.

Very gentle, and tender and kind was Mr. Morton and very quiet and thankful was Annie; Mr. Howson looked on contentedly, and even Miss Moxton forgot to turn up her nose. Very tender and affectionate was Mr. Morton, but it was not the affection or tenderness of a lover; but rather that of a fond brother. No thought of taking advantage of his position to speak one word of love ever entered his head, and Annie saw and liked him the better for it.

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## SCENE II.

### DEAD ON THE RIVER.

TIME, twentieth of January, eighteen hundred and seventy-one; place, the St. Lawrence river, opposite Montreal.

Dr. Griffith was taken back to Montreal, but was not tried at the Court of Queen's Bench in September, the case being postponed by consent of counsel until the March term.

He was very silent, very reserved; had contented himself with a simple plea of "not guilty," at the preliminary examination, and engaged two of the best criminal lawyers he could get to defend him. He offered no explanation, gave no information to his counsel, and they made up their minds they were defending a hopeless case, although they tried their best to find some tenable line of defence.

Time slipped away and Annie returned to Montreal; she was still very weak, very pale, very thin; all her beautiful hair, of which she had been so proud, had been cut off during the fever; her form was wasted, her cheeks hollow and devoid of color, and she was scarcely recognisable as the happy, joyous beauty who had run away only a few short weeks before.

She had never mentioned Griffith's name since that fatal night at Saratoga, and all allusion to him was carefully avoided in her presence, she was very still and silent, all her old gaiety and spirit seemed to have been driven out of her, and she moved about the house like the ghost of her former self.

Mr. Morton returned with the Howsons and continued as attentive as ever, the short drives were resumed, sometimes Julia or Miss Moxton accompanied them, sometimes they were alone. Almost every evening he made a short call, and she seemed to enjoy his society more than that of any one else; a quiet sort of

melancholy had settled on her, and Charlie was the only person who seemed to possess the power of temporarily driving it away. For no one else would she sing or play, and, sometimes, when she was playing some brilliant piece he would see the tears start into her eyes and quietly course down her wasted cheek. It was very bitter for him to watch her grieving so, but how could he help her.

Mr. Howson noticed this growing intimacy with great satisfaction; he had long ago "made up his mind" that Annie should marry Morton, and it pleased him greatly to see that matters were tending that way. He was too wise a man, however, to interfere, and so things were allowed quietly to take their own course.

Miss Moxton highly approved the turn affairs had taken, and so careful was she not to interfere that she generally managed, on some pretext or other, to leave the parlor when Morton called, so that he and Annie were a great deal together alone.

One evening about the middle of December they were sitting together, she at the piano idly running over the keys with her thoughts far away, he looking sadly and pityingly at her; presently she rose and pushing a low stool to his side sat on it, resting her head on his knee as she used to do when she was a little girl and Charlie was her big brother; somehow the old time seemed to have come back of late, and at times she could scarcely persuade herself that all the terrible events which had happened so recently were not a horrid dream, and that she was still a little girl with her big brother to watch over and protect her; only one thing recalled her to the reality of what had happened, a plain hoop of gold on the third finger of her left hand.

"Charlie," she said after a short pause, speaking so low that he could scarcely hear her, "will they hang him?"

It was the first time she had alluded in any way to the doctor, and the question came with such startling suddenness that Morton involuntarily started; in a moment her arm was thrown over his shoulder in the old childish manner, and her face was raised beseechingly to his.

"Oh, no, no, Charlie!" she cried piteously, "not that, don't let them kill him; you can save him, I know you can. Do it for my sake, Charlie; I shall die if he does. Don't let them kill him, Charlie, I love him so. I know it is wrong. I know he has been very wicked, that he committed——" she could not utter the word, but continued, "but he did it for my sake; I can't forget that,

Charlie, and I feel as if I was to blame too. And then I swore before God to love, honor, and obey him and to cling to him for better or worse; it has turned out worse—oh! so much worse—but that does not absolve me from my vow. I am his wife still and it is not for me to desert him when all are against him. Help me, Charlie, help me to save his life. I know what a hard thing I am asking you to do, to help the man who has so deeply, deeply wronged you; but, remember ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord, and be sure as you are merciful to him, so God’ will be merciful to you in your hour of need. Promise me, promise me, you will not let them take his life.”

The appeal had been uttered so earnestly and so rapidly that Morton had had no chance of interrupting her even had he been so disposed; as she stopped now he said, very gently:

“Annie, as God is my witness, if I had Harry Griffith’s life in my hand I would give it to you and say ‘take him, be happy with him if you can;’ but it is not in my power; I am not his judge; he is in the hands of the law, and no action of mine can stay the law from taking its course. What the result of the trial will be no one can at present positively assert; but it would be cruel in me to raise hopes when I see no probability of their being realized.”

She had scarcely heard him, she only knew from the tone of his voice that he was refusing her request, and she hid her face in her hands and wept silently.

“Will you let me see him?” she asked after a while, without looking up.

He had been expecting this question ever since she had returned to Montreal, and he had prepared to answer it.

“There is no objection to your seeing him as often as you like; but I do not think your father would approve of your visiting him.”

The face, wet with tears, but radiant with a happy, thankful smile, was raised to his, and she said:

“Take me to him to-morrow, Charlie, won’t you? Papa can scarcely object to a wife visiting her husband while he is in prison; and I am sure he won’t if you go with me.”

So it was arranged, and the next day their drive was to the jail, and the promised interview took place.

Mr. Morton, after gaining Annie admission to the ward in which her husband was confined, withdrew; he did not wish to meet

Harry Griffith, he wished never again to look on the man who had used him so cruelly ; he intended that justice should take its course, he had sworn that by the corpse of his murdered sister ; but as long as the law could execute justice without his interference he was content.

What passed between husband and wife it is not my business to relate ; let that be secret between them.

Annie's visit had a strange effect on the doctor ; hitherto he had been dull, apathetic, scarcely seeming to care whether he lived or died ; now he was all life and animation ; he had thought that Annie had discarded him like the rest of the world, but when he found out he had all her love still he felt there was something left worth living for, and he determined to leave no stone unturned to save his life, if possible.

He had a long interview with his lawyers next day, and they were astonished at the clear and plausible way he mapped out a defence, which, wild and improbable as it was, and scarcely likely to impress a jury, still afforded them the loop-hole which they had not been able to discover, and through which their client might escape.

Annie's first visit was followed by others ; sometimes she was accompanied by Morton, occasionally she was alone. The turnkey began to look for her regularly two or three times a week, and so the old year died and the new one was born, and winter was fairly set in and the river frozen.

It was in the middle of January when Annie began to put into execution a scheme she had formed the first time she visited the doctor, and that was to effect his escape.

They planned it over very carefully together, and it was agreed that if she succeeded in getting free he should go to Australia, where she promised to meet him in three years.

As it was now very cold weather and the gaol was a little damp, the doctor had been allowed to wear his overcoat and cap, a concession which he found very useful to him when he came to plan his escape. Annie furnished him with a rope, a file, and a bottle of oil, which he thought would be all he would require, and the night of the twentieth of January was set down for the attempt ; she visited him during the day and took an affectionate farewell of him, promising to come to him as soon as he sent for her. On his part he was greatly agitated and excited, but tried to appear calm for fear the suspicions of the prison authorities should be aroused.

The night was well adapted for his undertaking, it was intensely dark, cold, and a biting, chilling wind was blowing ; a night when the guards in the yard would not be likely to see him if he succeeded in getting out of the prison proper, so that he ran comparatively little danger of discovery in attempting to scale the wall.

He waited until nearly ten o'clock before he began his attempt to escape, and it was past one ere he stood outside the prison wall a free man. I am not going to describe his escape, for I have no notion of telling everybody how it was done. Suffice it to say that he succeeded in his plans and gained his liberty.

He was well provided with money, Annie having given him nearly a thousand dollars, the proceeds of the sale of some of her jewels, and he had his plan well laid out. It was to cross the river, hire a sleigh to drive him to Rouses Point, and take the train for some Southern city before his escape was discovered.

It was intensely cold ; the thermometer stood almost twenty degrees below zero, and the wind was cutting like a knife as he made his way down the bank towards the river. He had intended making his way to St. Lamberts, but in his hurry to get out of the city and to leave the public streets, he took the river at once and bent his steps towards Longueuil.

Some fatality seemed to influence his change of plan ; some unseen power appeared to be urging him on to look once more, and for the last time, on the scene of his crime. He knew the risk of detection he ran ; he knew he was well known in Longueuil and liable to be arrested at any moment if seen, but he trusted to the darkness and the little probability there was of any one being out at that hour in the morning. A fierce desire to view again the house where he had committed the murder took possession of him, and he lost all power to control his passion. He would see the spot once more, and from the place where he had done the foul deed should date the new life he intended to lead in the future.

He felt no remorse for his crime. He was sorry for it in one sense, but if it had to be done over again, he would probably have acted as he did before. Hard, cold, selfish and unscrupulous in gaining his ends he had been all his life, and hard, cold, selfish and unscrupulous he would be to the end.

He was sorry that he had committed the murder, but it was a selfish sorrow ; he was sorry because the result had been so disastrous to himself, and he cursed the folly which had prevented his taking some surer and more certain way to avoid detection.

On through the darkness he went, now straying off the track and stumbling amongst the ice heaps, again regaining the road by the aid of the *balises* placed to mark it. The cold wind whistled past him with a mocking laugh, and the drift covered him until he was a mass of snow. Once he strayed from the path and fell into an air-hole, going down to the arm-pits, and with difficulty saving himself from being drawn into the rapid waters below.

By a great exertion he managed to extricate himself and again finding the road, continued on his way ; but the shock had greatly exhausted him, and he felt his strength begin to give way. He could feel the water on his trousers forming to solid ice ; he could hear the turbulent stream below roaring in its might, as it hurried on to the sea. A numbness was seizing his whole frame ; his feet felt like lead, his hands had no sensibility in them. Huge icicles hung from his hair, moustache and eye-lids, and a sound of singing was in his ears. And still the pitiless wind persistently pelted him with perpetual pillets of snow, and the fierce blast swooped down on him like a mighty giant, chilling his very life-blood.

Still he kept on. To stop was death ; to go on was his only chance for life. Up almost to his knees in the drift at times or blown almost down by the mighty force of the wind.

That sound of singing grew louder and louder in his ears, and now church bells mingled with them : and again and again loud noises, like the booming of cannon, reverberated through his brain. The blood, fast turning to ice in every other part of his body, seemed changing to fire in his head, and his mind grew stronger in its intensity of perception as his limbs grew feebler and feebler under him.

Now in fancy he could see the church spire of Longueuil although it was still far, far away from him, and memory's eye pictured him the little cottage, on the outskirts of the village ; again he saw the still white face of his murdered wife lying placid on the pillow as he had last seen it ; again he went through that fearful scene which had placed the brand of Cain upon his brow ; again he laid the white bosom bare ; again he placed the sharp point of the glittering steel upon the snowy flesh ; again with fiendish force he drove the slender rod into the vital part, with a blow by a hammer ; again—Ah ; there before him he sees it now, a human heart, bleeding and pierced with a slender, glittering rod of steel ! It waves before him as he struggles, with difficulty,

forward ; mocking voices ring out around him through the driving blast ; sounds of ribald laughter and jeering shouts are borne to him on the whistling wind ; the very *balises* which mark his way seem to point at him and gibe him and hiss “murderer” at him.

He cannot pray ; long ago he has forgotten how to address himself to his Maker and sue for pardon and grace ; he has placed confidence only in himself all his life ; and has never learned to look for help and comfort to the Divine Giver of all good ; he has steadily and persistently stifled the voice of conscience for years, and now it cannot be aroused ; no pitying angel is near him now, no soft words of comfort are whispered in his ear ; hard he has lived, hard he must die, with little of hope or fear for that life beyond of which we all know nothing.

Still he blunders on, now up, now down ; still the icy feeling increases in his limbs, and the bells sound louder and louder, and that pierced heart swings more fearfully before him ; still the mocking voices and ribald laughter ring out more and more distinctly, and then—he stumbles and falls, falls to rise no more ; and the distant spire grows more and more indistinct ; the bells and singing grow fainter and fainter ; the sounds of laughter and of mocking are scarcely heard ; the blood begins to cool in his head ; the pulsations of the heart grow weaker and weaker ; a kind of sweet languor comes over him, a heavy drowsiness in which his thoughts travel back through long years and he is an innocent happy boy again ; he hears the songs of birds as he used to hear them when a youth ; the scent of the balmy southern flowers is in his nostrils ; he sees cane-fields nodding their waving plumes in the soft warm air ; he feels the impress of youthful innocent lips upon his forehead, and then—the numbness and the drowsiness increase, he gradually sinks into unconsciousness, the pulsations grow less and less marked, the action of the brain slower and slower, and there, out in the middle of the icy river, Harry Griffith ends his earthly career, frozen to death.

About five o’clock some *habitants* crossing with a load of hay were startled at the sight of a man lying on the ice, and hastened to raise and attempt to restore him to consciousness ; but it was too late, life had been extinct for hours, and Harry Griffith’s guilty soul had winged its way to its Maker, where, let us hope, it was mercifully dealt with.

### SCENE III.

#### AN UGLY BABY.

TIME, June twenty-fourth, eighteen hundred and seventy-one ; place, Mrs. Griffith's bedroom in her father's house.

The mortal remains of Harry Griffith were consigned to their mother earth with but scant ceremony ; few followed the corpse to the grave, and only one heart mourned for the one it had so loved.

Annie bore up well under the news of the doctor's death ; she gave way to no violent grief, but her melancholy grew deeper and deeper, and she seemed to be slowly, but surely fading away. She grew more and more quiet in her habits, and even Charlie Morton seemed to have lost his power to amuse and interest her. Their drives together were discontinued, and she never sang or played now ; indeed she tried as much as possible to avoid being left alone with Charlie, and he, seeing that his visits troubled her, came less and less frequently. And so the long, dull winter passed away, the brief spring came and went in its mantle of green, and bedecked with myriads of gorgeous flowers.

Mr. Howson tried to induce Annie to go to the seaside, or to accompany him on a trip to Europe ; but she steadily refused :

" Let me die here, in the old house, father," she said, " I know I shall not live long now, and I would like to end my days under the roof where some of the happiest, and some of the saddest hours of my life have been spent."

With the summer came the quiet bustle and preparation incident to the advent of a little stranger. Mysterious garments of a non-descript character were being busily prepared ; a subdued sort of preparation was going on ; a splendid cradle with wonderful mountings and gorgeous curtains was placed in Annie's room ; old Dr. Heartyman, the family physician, called frequently, and it was perfectly evident that an important event was at hand.

At last one morning early, when the first faint streaks of daylight were fighting for the mastery over night and darkness, a little, feeble spirit struggled its way into the world and looked at it out of the pale grey eyes of a little girl.

" What an ugly baby," exclaimed the doctor, involuntarily, when the red little specimen of humanity was presented to him. " I never saw a greater little fright."

" Nor I," answered the nurse, " it's the most awfullest looking baby I ever seed."

They had both spoken very low, but Annie's quick ear had caught the words, and a hot flush suffused her face as she called in a weak low voice from the bed :

“ Let me see it.”

Very tenderly she took the little form in her arms, and a strange feeling thrilled through her as she pressed her baby to her bosom for the first time. Long and earnestly she gazed on its red, swollen little face, and a few warm tears fell on it as she thought of its father lying in a nameless grave.

There was no doubt about its being an ugly baby ; the head was of immense size, misshapen, with curious bumps in some places and queer indents in others, as if it had been sat on ; as for features, if a baby can be said to have any, they were decidedly bad. It would not be perfectly true to say that it had no nose, but really that organ was so small that at first sight it seemed to be wanting ; the deficiency in the nasal department, however, was more than made up in the mouth, which was so large that when it cried—which it did as soon as it was born—its head appeared to open in half on a hinge, and be in great danger of falling off. The body was most disproportionately small, thin and attenuated, that it was quite a wonder to find that such a frail form could contain such excellent lungs, for it could cry with great strength and persistency.

It certainly was an ugly baby ; every one who saw it said so, everyone but the one who had given to birth ; to her it was the perfection of beauty, the embodiment of grace and loveliness. Laugh at a mother's pride in her first-born if you will ; but there is a subtle essence of poetry in the pride a mother takes in the appearance of her offspring which we men cannot fully understand.

“ You ought to be ashamed to call her ugly,” Annie said, as indigantly as her weak condition would permit, “ she is the very image of her father, and no one could call him ugly.”

This was said in a sort of general way to both the doctor and the nurse, and they accepted it jointly by simply bowing their heads in acknowledgment.

Very ugly was the baby, and very cross and feeble it proved also ; it scarcely could be said to have enjoyed good health from the hour of its birth ; it appeared to have come into the world without enough vitality to keep it alive, and, before it was ten days old, Dr. Heartyman declared that, although it might live,

for a few days longer, he did not believe there was any hope of its being reared.

Annie was extremely weak, but anxiety for her child seemed to give her temporary strength, and in three weeks she was out of bed. Very pale, and thin and feeble she was, but her heart was bound up in her baby, and she managed for its sake to keep up well. She never forgot the words used by the doctor and nurse at the child's birth and used to sit for hours and hours looking at the fragment of humanity and repeating to herself: "she is just like her papa, she isn't ugly at all."

On the twentieth of July the baby was seized with a severe attack of croup. Dr. Heartyman was sent for; he saw at once there was no hope and he tried, in the gentlest and kindest way, to prepare Annie for the worst.

"It is a very severe attack, my child," he said, "and few babes of her age could withstand it, even if they were strong and hearty; she is very weak and so—"

"Oh no, no, doctor!" she exclaimed covering her face with her hands, "don't say she must die, don't tell me there is no hope; must everything I love die, and I be left alive. Oh, my darling," she continued passionately, throwing herself on her knees by the cradle and taking the little form in her arms, "would to God we could die together; if you must go would that I could go with you. It seemed like a ray of sunlight when you came to brighten the darkness of my life; you are all I have to remind me of him, and you are so like him. Oh! stay with me, or let me go with you. And they called you ugly—you did, doctor, didn't you?—my beautiful little baby; and now you must die. Oh! doctor you cannot call her ugly anymore, for in a short while she will be one of God's white-robed angels, and they are all beautiful. My poor little darling, they called you an ugly baby."

"She is the prettiest child I ever saw in my life," blurted out Dr. Heartyman, with tears standing in his eyes, and great sobs coming up in his throat, "I never saw such a pretty baby. She is the image of her father."

"You think so?"

"Yes."

It was a lie, Dr. Heartyman, a gross, palpable lie, and you ought to have been ashamed of telling an untruth at your time of life; you knew it was an ugly little brat, but the bright, happy smile which for a moment lighted up the mother's face, the look

of gratified pride and pleasure satisfied you. You had touched the key-note of her heart and let in a ray of sunshine on one who was weighed down with care and sorrow; you had gratified a harmless and pardonable pride, and had, for the moment, lightened the burden of care pressing heavily on a tired heart.

Yet it was none the less a lie, doctor; but I think that when the recording angel looked into your heart and saw the goodness and purity of your intention, he either did not record that sin against you, or dipped his pen in the sympathetic ink of mercy so that the record would quickly fade away.

The baby died that night.

Annie never recovered the shock of her baby's death; she did not appear to have any special disease, she simply seemed to fade away. It was painfully evident that she was sinking, that she was daily losing strength and going, slowly but surely, to the grave. It was in vain that the most eminent physicians were called; in vain that every effort which affection could prompt, and money procure, was made to rouse and interest her; Annie's interest in this life was almost over, she cared but little for this world now, and had placed her hopes in the life beyond the grave, where she fondly hoped to be united again to those two loved ones who had gone before her.

The sun was sinking to rest on a warm July day, and his last departing rays lengthened the shadows in the room where Annie was lying in bed, taking her last look at the bright world, and bidding farewell to those kind and loving hearts she would know no more on this side of the grave. She knew she was dying: she felt sure of that without the kindly warning of Dr. Heartyman, but she felt no fear; she had long ago prepared herself for this, and tried to make her peace with her God. She wanted to die; life had lost all its sweetness and freshness to her, and she was anxious to pass that mystic boundary between the known and the unknown, and solve the problem of the hereafter at once; so she had no fear, only a firm, quiet confidence in God's mercy and goodness to aid her through the awful valley of the shadow of death, and to bring her to His everlasting kingdom.

It was a very sad group which assembled around her bed, Mr. Howson, Julia, Miss Moxton, Dr. Heartyman and Charlie Morton. Annie had taken leave of all of them except Charlie, somehow she seemed purposely to have left him for the last. Her voice was very low and weak, but she retained perfect consciousness,

and was in possession of all her faculties: her illness had wasted the once plump form, and hollowed and paled her cheek; the color had faded from her lips, and the old bright, laughing sparkle of her eye was dimmed; but a purer, holier expression had come over her face—a quiet, dignified calm which lent it a higher tone of loveliness. It was the first imprint of the beauty beyond the grave; the beauty which we are taught to believe and hope comes when the deformity and unsightliness of sin has been shaken off, and when the spirit stands in the presence of its Creator.

“Charlie,” she said, holding out her attenuated hand to him, “I am so sorry for all the grief and misery I have caused you. I I know, I can see it now, that much of what has happened was the result of my thoughtless, heartless flirting; I didn’t mean to pain or grieve you, Charlie, you have always been good and kind to me, my ‘dear, big brother,’ ” a faint smile wreathed itself around her lips as she used the term, and she continued; “Yes, my big brother, for you always have been like a brother to me; but I know I have pained and grieved you, Charlie, and you must try to forgive and forget me. No—don’t forget me; don’t let me pass out of your mind; think of me sometimes, Charlie, but don’t think of me as the headstrong, wilful woman who caused you pain and suffering, but think of me as the little girl you used to take on your knee and pet and caress. Love me, Charlie, as you used to in those days.”

He was down on his knees by the bedside now with his face buried in his hands, and great heart-drawn sobs shaking his whole frame: it seemed so hard to him that all he loved must be taken from him, and in the bitterness of the trial he prayed that it might please God to take him too.

“Don’t cry, Charlie,” she continued, “don’t cry for me; I shall be happier, I hope and trust, in the world beyond the grave than I ever have been, or could be on earth. I haven’t been as good as I ought to have been, but God is very merciful, and I feel calm and happy in His love.”

There was a pause of some minutes broken only by the half-suppressed sobs of the spectators, and then she spoke again, but so low, so feeble, that the words could scarcely be heard.

“It is coming now, I can see it, death; but I do not fear it. I see a bright and radiant form beside it, and fear is swallowed up in hope and thankfulness. Kiss me, Charlie, let the last memory I take out of this world be of your pure and noble love; kiss me.”

Fondly and reverently he folded the frail, loved form in his arms and imprinted a kiss on the pale lips; the first kiss he had pressed on them since she had grown to womanhood. A happy gratified smile stole over her face, a bright joyous light danced for a moment in her eyes; her lips trembled as if they strove to utter something, but only a faint sigh escaped them, and while he held her in his arms, while his lips were pressed to hers, the last beams of the setting sun flooded the room with a momentary burst of glory, and ere its brightness had passed away, Annie's spirit had taken its flight.

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## SCENE LAST.

## THE CURTAIN FALLS.

TIME, April first, eighteen hundred and seventy-three; place, the author's office.

My story proper ended with the foregoing chapter; but, somehow, I cannot sever the connection between my readers and myself without a few "last words." Even a criminal on the scaffold is allowed a few last words, and I suppose this culprit may be permitted to claim the same privilege.

I cannot claim any very high or mighty moral for my tale; it has a moral, I suppose, that crime and wrong-doing is sure to meet its just punishment, that vice may be triumphant for a while, but retribution is certain to overtake the wicked; I have not tried to gild evil so as to make it look like good, and I have not endeavored to place virtue on stilts so that it may be admired from a distance, like some sculptured marble; I have tried to paint human nature as we see it around us every day, and if I have succeeded in that, and in interesting and amusing you, I have attained my purpose as nearly as I ever expected to do.

It is now almost two years since the date of my last chapter, and perhaps you would like to know how some of the characters I have been writing about have fared in that time.

Charlie Morton is not married, nor is he likely to be. His heart lies buried in Mount Royal Cemetery under a pure white marble cross, bearing the inscription "Annie Griffith, aged 20 years 3 months," and he is not a man likely to love twice. He

discovered where his niece had been taken, and finding she was in good hands with the kind-hearted nuns of Hochelaga Convent left her there, content to visit her frequently and endeavour as far as possible to fill a father's place to her. She is all he has to live for now, and Miss Fan stands a good chance of being a spoiled child as far as he is concerned, for her will is law with him, and he cannot bring himself to believe that the word "no," was ever invented to be applied to her. Often as he takes her out with him memory carries him back twelve years in his life, and he can almost fancy the fair-haired little creature by his side is Annie as he first knew her when a little girl. Very quiet, still and methodical is Mr. Morton's life now, having but one object, the education and happiness of his niece, and time slips by easily and pleasantly for him. Let us hope that the future may bring him all the happiness and love in an old age, which his single-heartedness and simplicity of character deserve.

Mr. Harway was not so fortunate as he hoped to be; the detectives were rather too smart for him, and that perfect gentleman is now serving out his time in the Vermont State prison where he will, probably, spend the next three years. He complains a little about the prison rules which do not permit the consumption of any cold gin; and he protests strongly against the turnkey for taking away his handkerchief, thereby depriving him of the pleasure of dusting his boots and wiping his face afterwards; but I think he is well taken care of where he is, and there I shall leave him.

Mr. Boggs does not drive a cab now; his participation in the body-snatching business came out rather strongly at the inquest, and he was consequently refused a license when he applied the next year. He did not suffer by it, however, for Morton made him a handsome present, and he now keeps a hotel in the Eastern Townships and is doing well.

Theophilus Launcelot Polydor Johnson, Esq., is about to commit matrimony. Since Annie's death, Mr. Johnson has discovered that Julia is the girl for him, and he proposes to lead her to the hymenial altar some time next month, you know, and settle down and be steady, don't you see.

Mr. Augustus Fowler—commonly called Gus—has abandoned the study of medicine and devoted himself to the legal profession. He says he has made up his mind that he was not quite equal to murder, therefore, he is not suited for the medical profession; but

he thinks he can tell lies in a plausible sort of way, and that will be of great advantage to him if he ever gets a case to plead. Mrs. Sudlow has been more gracious to him of late, and there is every prospect of a wedding in St. Dominique Street some time this summer; the golden haired little beauty having expressed her opinion that she prefers June to July because——well, she didn't state the reason, but I suppose it is because June is one month earlier than July. I think that is all, and that everybody is disposed of, and, therefore, I will retire, and—and—

“Prompter, ring down the curtain !”

FINIS.





FROM BAD TO WORSE.



# FROM BAD TO WORSE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### OUT OF THE STREET.

It was a cold, windy morning in December, about eight years ago. The snow which had fallen during the night was drifting about in blinding clouds, rendering travel exceedingly unpleasant, and making those indoors very loth to quit their warm rooms to face the chilling blast. Perhaps it was the desire to get a little warmth into their half-frozen limbs which caused the crowd filling the gallery of the Recorder's Court, Montreal, on this particular morning to be so great; but, far more likely, it was that curious and depraved taste which delights in witnessing the punishment of others, which so large a number of Montrealers, especially amongst the lower orders, seem to have.

It is a curious thing to sit and watch this gallery in the Recorder's Court; to see the men and boys who day after day frequent it, and stand patiently (there are no seats) for hours listening with infinite relish to the dull monotony of the "drunks and disorderlies," and the stereotyped sentence "One dollar, or Eight days" fall from the lips of the Recorder.

I have often sat and watched the gallery—when I was forced to attend the Court daily—and wondered what possible pleasure these people could find in visiting the Court so often and hearing the same old story told over and over again. It isn't funny work. Once in a great while a little bit of humor will get into a case, or His Honor will say something funny, and all the policemen, as in duty bound, will laugh a quiet, decorous laugh, just sufficient to show that they "see the point," which they generally don't, but as a general thing it is dreary work; and how anybody can attend the Court with any idea of deriving pleasure from it I cannot discover.

I remember one old man whose silvery locks gave him a grave and venerable appearance, and who seemed to be rather above the ordinary run of visitors to the gallery in station, who actually

attended during the whole sitting of the Court for seventeen consecutive days and seemed really to enjoy it. I got quite accustomed to seeing his white head in the crowd, and felt quite disappointed on the eighteenth day when he failed to appear. I am afraid he is dead, or has left the city, for I have not seen him since ; and I scarcely think he could have withstood the pleasure it afforded him to attend the Court if he was in town.

This gallery is not an inviting place. It is the very concentration of filth, although the officers of the Court try manfully to make it presentable; but no amount of soap and water and scrubbing can possibly get much of a start on the constant stream of tobacco juice which is squirted on the floor, and on the little platform which runs in front of the gallery. The smell is almost insufferable, and the normal condition of the walls is dirt.

On the morning in question the Court was more than ordinarily crowded, for it was Monday, and, as is usual on that morning, the number of cases was large. The Court was a little late in opening, and practised observers expressed an opinion that the delinquents would "catch it heavy," as the Recorder came in with a dark frown on his generally good-natured, jolly countenance. Evidently something had disturbed the usual serenity of his temper, and "the quality of mercy" was not at all likely to be strained that morning.

There was very little of interest in the first dozen cases or so, they all coming under the denomination of " simple drunks." The next case, however, caused the Recorder to smile as he read the name "John Smith."

"What is his real name?" asked His Honor, leaning over his desk and speaking to the Sergeant who was in charge.

"I don't know," replied the Sergeant. "I never saw him before. He was very drunk when he was brought in, and refused to give any other name."

"John Smith!" shouted the Sergeant, and John Smith stepped in the dock.

He was quite different in appearance to the "hard cases" who had preceded him. He was apparently about twenty-five years of age, tall, dark complexioned, with long, straight black hair, and bright, piercing black eyes. His carriage was easy and graceful, and the hand which grasped the rail of the dock was small and shapely as a woman's. His dress was shabby, but looked

like the miserable remains of a once elegant suit. But for the sodden, bloated appearance which drink had stamped upon his countenance, he would have been a remarkably handsome young man; but in his present condition he looked like a fair sample of that miserable state of existence known as "shabby genteel." He seemed greatly ashamed, and hung his head as if to hide his features as much as possible from sight.

"What is your name?" asked His Honor.

"John Smith."

"I know that is the name you have given, sir; but what is your real name?" said His Honor, very severely.

No answer.

"I will not have persons giving false names here," continued His Honor; "for all that I know John Smith may be a very respectable citizen, and it may injure him to have his name appear in the list of delinquents before this Court. Poor John Smith," he half soliloquized, "he must be a very great drunkard indeed if we are to believe all the statements persons make, for there is scarcely a day but what his name is given, but generally by a different person. Come, sir, what is your name, now? I know it isn't John Smith."

"Arthur Austin," this was said very low, and the sound scarcely reached half way across the Court.

"What? Speak up man, open your mouth and let me hear what you have to say."

No answer.

"Sergeant, bring him round here, I cannot hear what he says," said His Honor, and the prisoner was placed in the small iron enclosure immediately in front of the Recorder.

"Now, what is your real name?"

"Arthur Austin." The reply was made in a very low voice, as if the owner of it was ashamed to hear it in such a place.

"Arthur Austin," repeated His Honor, writing the name over that of John Smith on the sheet before him. "It is really a pity," he continued, indulging in one of his little lectures, "to see so young and respectable looking a man as you given over to the demon of drink. With your appearance of intelligence you ought to be filling some responsible and lucrative position, instead of which you stand here a miserable object picked up drunk in a gutter, where you ought to be thankful you were not left to freeze to

death and to be hurried into the presence of your Maker in a state of intoxication. What is the case, Sergeant? Call the policeman who arrested him."

A venerable policeman, with a large development of under lip, and who, probably, had had many such cases to deal with during his long career in the force, stepped into the witness box and began in the usual stereotyped style:—

"Between eight and nine o'clock last night, your Honor, as I was coming down Craig street I seen —"

"In the city of Montreal?" asked the clerk of the Court, who is very exact and particular.

"In the City of Montreal," repeated the policeman in a deprecatory tone, as if he had intended to say it if he had been given a fair chance, "I see this man—"

"Do you mean the prisoner at the bar?" interrupted the precise clerk.

"When I see the prisoner at the bar," said the policeman, allowing the correction, "lying on the sidewalk near St. Lambert's Hill. He was very drunk, so I arrested him, and took him to the station."

"What station?" sharply demanded the clerk, as if he felt sure of catching the policeman tripping this time.

"The Central Station."

"In the City of Montreal?"

"In the City of Montreal" admitted the policeman, and the clerk leaned back in his chair, rested his head on his hand, and gazed before him, with the calm conviction of a man who has performed a great and trying duty, and, if the prisoner escaped justice now, it was through no fault of his.

"Did he make any resistance?" asked His Honor of the policeman.

"No, your Honor."

"Had he no money about him?" asked the Recorder of the Sergeant.

"Only five cents, Your Honor."

"One dollar, or eight days," and Arthur Austin was taken down stairs, either to pay his fine or go to jail.

There was a very respectable, well-dressed, pleasant-looking old gentlemen sitting in one of the seats appropriated for witnesses, or the better class of visitors, who had watched the young

man while he was in the dock, and seemed greatly interested in him. He took off his gold-rimmed spectacles, carefully wiped them, replaced them on his nose, and, turning to the person sitting next to him, asked,

“ Will he be sent to jail if he does not pay that dollar ? ”

“ Of course he will, for eight days,” was the answer.

“ It is a great pity,” said the old gentleman, sadly, “ a great pity, to see so respectable a young man in such a condition. Could any one pay the fine for him ? ” he continued, after a moment’s pause.

“ Certainly ; perhaps his friends will, if he has any.”

“ Where is the money paid ? ”

“ Down stairs, to the sergeant in charge.”

The old gentleman said no more, but sat quietly until the case in which he was interested was called. It was a very simple one ; his nephew, a boy of about ten, had been coasting down Guy street, and a bobby, blessed with long legs, had arrested him, after a brief but exciting chase.

It took a long time to get at the facts of the case, for the policeman was not very consecutive in his evidence, and he was so often interrupted and kept to the point by the exact clerk, that his testimony was considerably mixed, and it appeared extremely doubtful whether it was the boy who was coasting in a bob-sleigh and knocked down the policeman, or the policeman who was coasting and knocked down the boy, or the bob-sleigh which knocked down both ; all that was very clear was that there was a policeman, a boy and a bob-sleigh, and that they got considerably mixed. At last the policeman made out a pretty fair case against the boy, which was to the effect that he was crossing Guy street, on St. Antoine, when two boys came down the hill on a bob-sleigh and knocked him down, that he chased the boys and arrested one of them, the prisoner at the bar.

His Honor cleared his throat and prepared to administer a little “ good advice ” to the boy, before fining him. “ It is wonderful,” he said, “ to think how little regard for their own or other people’s lives many of the boys in large cities have. Every winter there are numerous accidents, caused by boys sliding and coasting on the streets and sidewalks, and the only wonder is that all of them are not run over and killed by sleighs and taken home dead to their parents.”

Here he looked very hard at the boy, who seemed greatly impressed by the idea of his own sudden death, for he stuck his tongue very hard into one cheek and looked intently at the floor, while he traced the shape of a coffin with the toe of his boot.

"It is to a great extent the fault of parents," continued His Honor, looking very hard at the old gentleman in the gold spectacles, "who allow their children to run about the streets when they ought to be at home or at Sunday school."

Here he looked so hard at the old gentleman in gold spectacles that that individual grew very red in the face and rose as if with the intention of addressing the Court, but was forced to sit down again rather suddenly on account of a vigorous pull at his coat tail, administered by a policeman who whispered something in his ear.

"I am determined to make a few examples," continued His Honor, with another look at the old gentleman, "and if parents or guardians choose to allow their children to desecrate the Lord's day and annoy, and possibly injure, people going to or coming from church, they must be made to pay for it, and I hope the boys will get good whippings when they get home. Fifty cents or four hours' imprisonment."

The latter part of this speech had made a great impression on the small boy, and he appeared, to a casual observer, to be moved to tears, for his face was almost buried in his hands and his frame shook with emotion; but a close examination would have shown that the thumb of his left hand was suspiciously near his nose, and the expressive wink he gave at another small boy accused of the same heinous offence was not very suggestive of fear or veneration for the majesty of the law.

When the case was over the old gentleman went down stairs, and received from the Sergeant the difference between the amount at which the boy had been bailed—two dollars and a half—and the amount of the fine.

"Has Arthur Austin's fine been paid?" he asked.

"No, nor not likely to be. He says he has no friends in the city to whom he could apply for help."

"Could I see him, and talk to him for a few minutes?"

"Certainly," said the Sergeant "politely, just step this way, please."

The old gentleman followed the Sergeant, and was soon seated in the inner portion of the Station, talking to Arthur Austin.

The young man's story was very simple, and very common. He was an Englishman, whose father had emigrated to the States while he was quite a boy ; he had been in business with his father in New York and had been very rich. A financial panic occurred and the firm failed ; the father died ; the son came to Canada to seek employment as a clerk ; he had succeeded at first, but the mania for drink, which had grown on him since his misfortunes, had caused his discharge about three weeks before the opening of my story, and he was now without a friend or a dollar. This was about the substance of Arthur Austin's story. He told it simply, did not attempt to offer any excuse for his dissipation, and seemed heartily ashamed of it.

The old gentleman looked at him quietly for a little while before he spoke, then he asked, suddenly :

“ Were you ever locked up before ? ”

“ Never,” he said, with a shudder, “ and if I ever get out I'll take precious good care I never get in again.”

“ Then you must give up the use of intoxicating drinks.”

“ I have done so ; I have had my last drop of intoxicating drink for my whole life.”

“ Good ! ” said the old gentleman, patting him on the back, “ stick to that vow and you will be all right.”

“ I have made no vow, and need to make none ; the memory of the misery I suffered in that cell and in the prisoner's dock this morning is stronger than all the vows I could make.”

The old gentleman talked to him for some time and at last paid his fine, gave him a dollar to buy something to eat, and told him to call at his office at two o'clock. On the card which he gave the young man was printed “ Lubbuck, Lownds & Co., Produce and Commission merchants, Common street.” The old gentleman was Mr. Stephen Lubbuck, the head of the firm.

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That visit of Arthur Austin to Mr. Lubbuck proved the turning point in his life, and opened to him a new and honorable career. The old gentleman had taken quite a fancy to the young man, one of those curious freaks of a generous nature which sometimes occur with elderly gentlemen towards those whom they look on as young enough to be their sons. The quiet, gentlemanly manner, and plain straightforward answers of the young man, increased this feeling, and it was, therefore, not surprising that before the

interview was over Arthur Austin found himself engaged at a fair salary as assistant bookkeeper to the firm of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. He had several letters of introduction from New York and Boston houses ; and the firm by whom he had been employed here gave him an excellent character for everything except temperance. That point Mr. Lubbuck determined to risk, feeling confident that Arthur would not return to his old habit again.

Arthur Austin's conduct for the next four months fully justified Mr. Lubbuck's good opinion of him, and the old gentleman congratulated himself on having secured a treasure. Early and late Arthur was at his post, and performed his duties better than any clerk Mr. Lubbuck had ever had. Quick, attentive, fully acquainted with his business, Arthur Austin not only gained the confidence of his employer but of his fellow clerks, whom he was always ready and willing to assist in their duties.

Arthur Austin had now a career of honor and usefulness opened to him, and seemed determined to profit by his opportunity. He left the boarding house he had been in, so as to remove himself from his old jolly companions, and went to one in a better and quieter neighborhood. He avoided all his old haunts, in order more securely to guard himself against temptation, joined a temperance association, and devoted his spare time almost entirely to reading.

As the spring gradually advanced and navigation opened, Arthur Austin proved himself of still greater service to his employers. He was acquainted with many of the leading produce and commission houses in Boston, New York and Chicago, and speedily gained several new and valuable correspondents for Lubbuck, Lownds & Co., whose business was greatly increased thereby, and Arthur rose still higher in his employers' estimation.

It was his custom on leaving the office to walk up St. James street and through Victoria square on his way home, and one evening, as he was crossing the square, he noticed a young lady standing by the fountain, with the tip of her parasol resting on the low wall surrounding it. She was gazing in an abstracted, pre-occupied manner into the water, and only presented a profile view ; but as Arthur first caught a glimpse of that outline he thought he had never seen anything half so beautiful in his life. Just as he stepped close behind her she started suddenly and looked up, and in the action of surprise loosed her hold of her parasol, and it immediately tumbled into the water.

It was the work of a moment for him to step forward, rescue the parasol, and return it to its owner, with a few words of apology for having unintentionally startled her.

"Oh, don't apologize," she said, turning on him the full battery of the sweetest pair of blue eyes he had ever encountered, while a smile rippled for a moment across the rosiest and most kissable lips he had ever seen, "it was my fault; I stood dreaming while I waited for Frank, and your step startled me, that was all."

Arthur stood for a moment, gazing at her in admiration, and wondering whether he might, with propriety, endeavor to improve the chance acquaintance, or simply raise his hat and pass on. "Who was Frank?" he thought, and somehow a feeling of deadly animosity to that unknown individual stole over him, and he would have very much liked to have had "Frank" there, and have had it out with him on the spot.

## CHAPTER II.

### OUT OF THE SQUARE.

MR. STEPHEN LUBBUCK was an old bachelor, and lived in a pleasant little villa of his own on Sherbrooke street, where his widowed sister and her two daughters, and the little boy we have already seen figuring in the Recorder's Court, lived with him. Mr. Lubbuck was an easy-going, quiet old gentleman who had drifted through life very pleasantly, having met with few misfortunes other than those incidental to any young man struggling to make his way in the world. He started from his home in England at the age of sixteen, and came to Canada, where, after several years roughing it, he settled down in Montreal as a clerk in a produce house. His progress was slow, but sure; and, at the age of thirty-five, he found himself admitted as a junior partner, and in a fair way to competency, if not great wealth. He had been too busy, heretofore, to think of matrimony, but now he began to think how pleasant it would be to have a home of his own and a bright, loving face to grace it.

He was a careful, prudent man, however, was Stephen Lubbuck, and he thought he would get the cage first and then catch the canary that was to inhabit it. But it took him a year or two to get a cage to suit him, and then he looked about for several years more before he found any one to suit him; and he was still looking about him when he received intelligence of the death of his brother-in-law, Herbert Williams, and he thought of the bright little sister of ten he had left behind in Liverpool twenty-five years before, and who was now a widow, almost destitute, and with three children, two girls, aged eight and nine respectively, and a little baby boy of four months. He thought of his bright boyish days and his fond sister's love, and he thought he had found his canary—or canaries—and so he sent for and installed them in the cage.

Very happily and pleasantly did the little family live together for the next ten years, and many and many a time did Mr. Lubbuck congratulate himself on the canaries he had finally put in his cage after so many years waiting.

The two girls grew up to budding womanhood, but, as they grew

older, they became more and more dissimilar, both in appearance and temperament. Frances, the elder, was a tall, robust girl, with big bones, and a general appearance of having been lately polished with an exceedingly rough towel. Her hair was an uncertain black, and her eyes of a waterish grey, quite the reverse of beautiful; her nose was undoubtedly and defiantly a "snub," and her wide mouth displayed a formidable array of grinders, unquestionably highly useful in the masticatory department, but quite a failure as regarded beauty. There was no question about it, Frances was a very plain-looking girl, and had a decidedly masculine appearance. She was slightly masculine in tastes, too. When a little girl, she could run, jump, climb trees, and play marbles, or peg top with any boy in the neighborhood. As she got older she affected muscular exercises, could pull a good oar, use dumb-bells, etc., and managed to develop a vast quantity of bone and a good proportion of muscle; indeed she had more than once remarked, "I could take half these whipper-snapper things called young men, and break them across my knee without any trouble," and she certainly looked as if she could do it. She not only preferred boyish games and exercises, but also masculine studies. She learned Latin, Greek, mathematics, etc., and studied hard at medicine, for the practice of which she acquired a great taste; and it was only by the greatest persuasion that her uncle could induce her to forego her pet idea of going to college, receiving a diploma and entering on general practice. In her early days she had killed four dogs, experimenting on them, and she totally destroyed the digestive organs of three promising young cats, and made them lead miserable lives until she had worried the whole twenty-seven lives out of them. Now she experimented on the servants, but in a mild manner, and did not make more than one a month dangerously ill, which was better than some doctors could do.

You must not think I am describing a wild, uneducated burlesque on femininity; poor Frank, as she was usually called, was as good and warm-hearted a girl as could be found in Montreal, quiet and unpresuming in manner, talented beyond the average, and generous to a fault. Her great drawback was that she looked like a man, thought like a man, had the tastes and feelings of a man, and was a woman.

It would have been hard in all Montreal to find a greater contrast to Frances Williams than in her sister Jessie. Short, slight, *petite*, with great masses of wavy golden hair, bright sky-

blue eyes, a clear pink and white complexion, a rosebud of a mouth, and pearls for teeth, Jessie Williams was the fairest, sweetest little vision one could wish to dawn upon him. Made all for sunshine, and joy, and pleasure, she flew about like a beautiful butterfly, carrying warmth and light wherever she went.

In temper, as in appearance, the sisters were equally dissimilar. While Frances was quiet, slightly reserved and self-sustained, Jessie was all impulse, poetry and sensibility. It is almost useless to say that Jessie was the pet of the family, in fact, almost a spoiled child. She had had a first-class superficial education ; could play the piano well, sing passably, dance exquisitely, had a smattering of French, and had acquired an immense stock of romance, gathered principally from sensation novels and the American weekly papers. A girl of tender loving qualities, capable of being a good, useful wife and mother, or a heartless flirt and coquette, according to the circumstances into which she was thrown.

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Arthur Austin's dilemma did not last long. While he was debating with himself whether he should simply bow and pass on, or endeavor to take advantage of the slight opportunity offered him to improve a pleasant chance acquaintance, his doubts were suddenly simplified by his companion exclaiming:

“Here’s Frank!”

Arthur turned and saw approaching them a severe and not very prepossessing female, who struck him very much at first as being a man in disguise. Miss Frances Williams—for, of course, she was “Frank”—advanced rather quickly, and threw an inquiring glance from her sister to the strange gentleman she found her with.

“Oh, Frank,” said Jessie, before her sister could speak, “I got so tired waiting for you that I began to have a day-dream by the fountain, and I dropped my parasol into the water ; and—and—this gentleman,” with a sly look at Arthur from under her eyelashes, which set his blood boiling, “was kind enough to fish it out for me.”

“I am very much obliged to you, sir, for saving my sister’s parasol from drowning” said Frank, very demurely. “I hope you did not hurt yourself much by the exertion.”

“Oh, no ! I assure you—very much pleased—allow me—” stammered Arthur, so much surprised at the quiet, self-possessed tone

of the masculine feminine he was addressing that he did not know what he was saying.

"Come, Jessie, let us go home," said Frank, turning to her sister, "I am sorry I kept you so long waiting," and she quietly walked off with Jessie without looking at Arthur Austin again. But Jessie turned as she passed the fountain, and shot back one bright glance and a half smile at Arthur, and he went home feeling lighter at heart and treading more elastically than he had done for many a long day. All the evening he thought of that brilliant vision he had seen beside the fountain, and at night he dreamed of a mass of golden hair, and a pair of sky-blue eyes, and heard a soft, sympathetic voice saying, "And this gentleman was kind enough to fish it out for me."

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Arthur Austin thought a good deal about "the lady by the fountain," as he styled her, during the next few days; and the memory of the handsome young gentleman who had so gallantly rescued her parasol and ruined his shirt cuff in so doing, was not quite absent from the mind of Jessie. Perhaps, you do not believe in love at first sight? Well, I do not altogether, in the abstract, and such passions are usually evanescent, yet they do sometimes occur, and both these young people who had met so casually felt the magnetic influence of each other's presence; and, without being "in love" with each other, still very sincerely desired that this accidental meeting should not be their last. Fortune did not favor Arthur Austin for some days, for, although he almost "haunted" Victoria Square, he saw no more of "the lady by the fountain." About a week had elapsed, when one evening as he was walking home with a friend they met the object of Arthur's thoughts, accompanied by her sister.

As she approached Jessie averted her eyes, but took a sly glance out under the lashes. Arthur timidly and half hesitatingly raised his hat, and then she turned towards him for a second, and acknowledged his salutation by a slight bow and a bewitching little smile. Frank elevated her snub nose a trifle higher than usual, and was passing on when she noticed Arthur's companion, who was bowing very politely, and then her features relaxed into a smile, and she returned his salutation with the air of an old friend. Jessie, also, gave him a kindly smile and bow, and so the two couples passed each other.

" You know them ? " said Arthur.

" Certainly," returned Charlie Benson, his companion. " Frank and her sister are old friends of mine. You know them also, do you not ? I thought you bowed."

" Yes, after a fashion. Who are they ? "

" Frank Williams and her sister. Where did you meet them that you do not know their names ? "

Then Arthur told of his little adventure by the fountain, and his friend laughed at it.

" Case of love at first sight, I suppose ; struck dead and all that sort of thing, eh ? Well, a little harmless passion does not do a boy any harm."

Benson was about thirty and Austin about twenty-five, so the former thought he could affect a few senorial airs.

" You did not tell me the name of the youngest lady ? "

" Jessie."

" Jessie ; that is a very pretty name," said Arthur.

" Yes ; and a pretty little doll of a girl," replied his companion.

" Are you very intimate with them ? "

" Yes, tolerably well so ; know them for about five years. Oh, don't be bashful, I know what you want to say, you want me to introduce you ; well, I will display the natural generosity of my disposition and promise to do so without being asked. Want to hear a little family history ? Here it is. Girls' father is dead, they and their mother live with their uncle, a rich old bachelor who will leave them all his money. There is a chance for you. I don't mind confessing I feel a little spooney on Frank myself sometimes, only she is so fond of practising medicine I am half afraid she would dose me to death in a year. Say, seriously, old boy, Jessie would not be a bad spec for you," and he smiled a quiet, peculiar smile which Arthur remembered afterwards. " Ta, ta, I'm at home : the next time we meet them I will claim the privilege of an old friend, stop them, and introduce you."

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Arthur Austin was duly introduced. Frank turned up her nose again, but Jessie smiled very sweetly, and, as the quartette walked away together, Mr. Benson went a little ahead with Frank, and gave Arthur and Jessie an opportunity to pleasantly bring up the rear. The conversation was very commonplace, but Jessie had a charming way of saying nothing as if it meant some-

thing, and smiling and looking up with those bright blue eyes of hers, which was very bewitching ; and Mr. Arthur Austin felt himself momentarily falling deeper and deeper into that unfathomable abyss called love. He knew he was falling, but he liked it and wanted to fall more.

After that first afternoon Benson and Austin managed to meet the girls several times, and Arthur's acquaintance progressed rapidly and pleasantly. There were no direct words of love spoken, few compliments and fewer " pretty speeches ; " but Jessie could scarcely fail to understand the warmth of his manner, and she liked it. As for Arthur, he was alternately hot or cold as Jessie smiled on him, or smiled at some chance acquaintance they met. I am afraid Miss Jessie was a bit of a flirt, and liked, as all flirts do, to torment her victim a little, and then pacify him by a little extra graciousness ; just as a playful child will swing a pet kitten by the tail preparatory to giving it a saucerful of milk.

One day about twelve o'clock Arthur was crossing Victoria Square, when he saw Jessie coming towards him alone. It was the first time he had met her alone since that memorable afternoon when he had saved her parasol for her, and his pulse beat a little quicker as she approached. They met at nearly the old spot, and after a few formal sentences they got into closer conversation.

They were standing talking earnestly together when Mr. Stephen Lubbuck, coming up one of the side paths, saw them, and stopped in amazement at finding his pet niece and his confidential clerk in such close converse. The old gentleman took off his gold spectacles, wiped them, put them on again, took another look, satisfied himself that he had not labored under an optical illusion, and then retired the way he had come, without having been noticed by the pair ; but there was a sterner and more angry expression on his face than was usually to be found on that serene countenance.

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Arthur Austin's acquaintance with Jessie was rather a peculiar one. He knew her personally ; he knew that she was an old friend of Benson's, and that she was the sweetest little lady he had ever met, but he did not know where she lived or who her relations were—except her sister ; or in fact scarcely anything about her, except that he was deeply in love with her. At that last meeting by the fountain she had been kinder than usual, and, after accept-

ing a pretty little bouquet which Arthur had ventured to present her with, had pulled a forget-me-not from it and fastened it in his button hole, promising that if he and his friend Benson chanced to be walking down Sherbrooke street about four o'clock the next afternoon they should meet two young ladies they knew.

Arthur Austin completed his errand and returned to the office. To his surprise he found Mr. Lubbuck still there. The old gentleman usually went home about half-past four, and it was long after that hour. As soon as Arthur entered Mr. Lubbuck said, very gravely,

“Mr. Austin, I should like to see you in my private office for a few minutes.”

Arthur followed the old gentleman into that *sanctum sanctorum* of business houses, the “Private Office,” and stood before his employer awaiting developments.

“Mr. Austin,” said Mr. Lubbuck very gravely, and Arthur felt hurt that he should address him so formally, for lately he had always called him by his Christian name, “how long have you known my niece?”

“Your niece, sir! I know you have two nieces, but I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with them, nor have I ever seen them, to my knowledge.”

“I am very sorry, Mr. Austin,” said Mr. Lubbuck, severely, “that you should think it necessary to tell me a lie. I have been a good friend to you, have lifted you to a good position, and I regret, for the first time, to find that you are untruthful. You say you do not know my niece, yet I saw you talking to her not an hour ago.”

“Do you mean in Victoria Square?” asked Arthur, beginning to understand the facts of the case.

“Yes.”

“Then Miss Williams is your niece?”

“Most undoubtedly.”

“I assure you, sir, I was not aware of the fact. If you had asked me if I knew Miss Williams I should have admitted at once that I not only know her but greatly admire her; but I was not aware of the fact that she was your niece.”

“Is this true?”

“I hope you will not doubt me, sir, when I pledge my word of honor as a gentleman to the truth of my assertion.”

"No, no, I do not doubt you in the least, I will speak to you again on this subject. Good evening."

"Good evening, sir."

Arthur Austin left the room; and Mr. Lubbuck put on his hat, pulled it well down over his eyes and started for home, thinking deeply on what he should say to his favorite niece about the strange acquaintance he had discovered that she had made.

## CHAPTER III.

### OUT OF THE CHURCH.

“JESSIE, how long have you known Mr. Austin?”

Jessie looked up at her uncle with a quick inquiring glance, and answered promptly “about a month.”

“Do you think it right or proper for a young lady to have clandestine meetings with a man she has only known a month, and whose acquaintance with her is at least a doubtful one? Where did you first meet him?”

“I met him in—in—” stammered poor Jessie, getting quite confused and growing uncomfortably red in the face. Before she could finish the sentence, however, Frank came to her assistance in her usual prompt manner, by saying, “Charlie Benson introduced Mr. Austin to us one afternoon when we were out walking.”

“Oh! you know him too!”

“Certainly, and I think him a very pleasant fellow,” said Frank, anxious to give Jessie a little time to recover. Mr. Lubbuck stood a little in awe of his masculine niece, and in very wholesome dread of her doses and decoctions in the medical line; besides, he knew and liked Charlie Benson; and he had, moreover, a high regard for Arthur Austin; he was not, therefore, disposed to view the matter very severely. Still, he did not like to be too lenient all of a sudden, so he preserved his grave manner and said, addressing Jessie, “I do not approve of young ladies meeting young gentlemen in public places, and standing talking confidentially to them; it does not look well, and frequently gives occasion for unkind and unpleasant remarks. How did it happen that you met Mr. Austin alone?”

“I—I—don’t know,” faltered poor Jessie, feeling very much like a naughty child who feared punishment, “I was only—”

“Uncle,” said Frank, cutting in suddenly, and speaking in her prompt, determined way, “it seems to me you are speaking very harshly to Jessie about a very simple matter; one would think that Jessie had been meeting Mr. Austin clandestinely, and by appointment; now I have been with her every time she has seen

him and it has only been three or four times, and then only for a few minutes walk—and she happened to be alone with him in the square because—because—“Frank hesitated a moment, blushed a little and continued—” because I left her in the square for two or three minutes while I did an errand at Morgan’s for Mamma.”

Frank omitted to state that it was on a former, and not the present, occasion she had so left Jessie.

“Oh! Frank,” exclaimed Jessie.

“Don’t be a fool,” said the brusque Frank *sotto voce*.

“You misunderstand me, Frank,” said Mr. Lubbuck rather overcome by his niece’s volubility, “I do not object to a proper acquaintance between Mr. Austin and yourselves; I only took exception to the manner in which that acquaintance had been formed; but don’t let us say any more about it; you girls are young and giddy, and I daresay no harm was intended on either side. I might say,” continued Mr. Lubbock, willing to make a little concession, “that I esteem Mr. Austin very highly; he is an exceedingly clever young man, steady, and undoubtedly a gentleman; I scarcely think you can derive any harm from an acquaintance with him, provided it is properly conducted and not allowed to go too far.”

“So you know him, too!” exclaimed Frank.

“Certainly, my dear, he is my bookkeeper and confidential clerk, a very clever young man.”

“Then, Uncle,” said matter-of-fact Frank, determined to make the most of the advantage she had gained, “if he is such a clever young man and you like him so much, why don’t you ask him to come and see you? I’m very democratic in some things, you know, and I believe in employer and employee knowing each other socially as well as in business.”

“Yes, my dear, but—”

“Oh! you need not be afraid of me, I like men’s society,—I wish I was a man, instead of a poor helpless woman, but you need not fancy I shall fall in love with his handsome face and fine moustache; and as for Jessie, if such a foolish notion gets into her head I’ll give her a seidlitz powder, and bleed her. So, Uncle, ask Mr. Austin and Charlie Benson to dinner on Sunday.”

“Oh! its Charlie? is it?”

“Don’t be a silly old goose, but ask them like a good old fellow as you are.”

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"Mrs. Williams presents her compliments to Mr. Arthur Austin and requests the pleasure of his company to dinner on Sunday next at six o'clock."

It was a stiff, formal little note, but in Arthur Austin's eyes it was very precious, for he felt that Mrs. Williams never traced those fairy characters, and it was as much as he could do to restrain himself from pressing the writing, which he felt sure was Jessie's, to his lips. He did not do any thing so ridiculous, however, but, after a few moments' thought, walked into Mr. Lubbuck's private office, and, handing the note to him, said :

"I found that on my desk, a few minutes since, sir."

"Yes. I put it there myself, and I beg to add my own request to that of Mrs. Williams, that you will dine with us on Sunday."

"I shall be very happy, I assure you, sir. I"—

"Mr. Austin," said Mr. Lubbuck, gravely, "I have already told you, and have given you tangible proofs of my sincerity, that I have been highly pleased with your conduct since you have been with me. Our business arrangements have been highly satisfactory, but I feel, as my niece Frank expresses it, that 'employer and employee should know each other socially as well as in business.' I think men get at each other's inner natures better over their dinners, and a glass of wine. Oh! I ask your pardon, I forgot you do not take wine, and quite right too—than in a year's business transactions together. I do not mind confessing that I desire to know you more thoroughly than I have done during the six months you have been with me, as I contemplate some business changes this fall which may render it necessary for me to be able to trust implicitly in you. I, therefore, hope to see you frequently at my house in future, and hope that our social relations may prove as satisfactory as our business ones have done. I wish, however, to be perfectly frank with you; you will of course be frequently thrown into the society of my nieces, whose acquaintance you have already made; now I do not object to an acquaintance, or even a friendship springing up between you, but there must be no idea of its ever being anything more. Frank, I'm not afraid of, she's able to take care of herself, and is more than a match for any man, unless he can stand unlimited experiments in medicine, and has the constitution of a horse; but my little pet Jessie is scarcely more than a child, and I won't have ony one trying to stuff her head with nonsense for these many years to come. I am plain with you, because I want no

misunderstanding in this matter. If you want to fall in love with anybody try Frank, she'll soon bleed and blister you out of the idea. I have been so candid with you because you said you not only knew but admired my niece; now get any such foolish notion out of your head at once, or it will lead to a disruption of all our relations, business and otherwise. That will do; bring me the morning paper and the letters."

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Arthur Austin soon became a constant and welcome visitor at Mr. Lubbuck's, and grew steadily in favor not only with the old gentleman, but with the whole family. Even Frank—who, although she liked the society of men, generally declared that the young men of the present day had no brains and were decidedly "flat"—declared that Arthur was "a brick," which was a great compliment from Miss Frank, and that he was "a fellow who knew something."

In fact Arthur was "a fellow who knew something;" he had received a first-class education, had travelled a great deal, was naturally observant, and possessed that rare faculty of talking just enough to please and interest, but not enough to bore. He could sing tolerably well, possessing a fair voice, which he managed cleverly. He fairly captured Frank by his knowledge of medicine, and when he showed that young lady an experiment in electricity and very nearly resuscitated a defunct tom-cat which had been poisoned while experimenting on him the day before, Miss Frank's admiration knew no bounds, and she almost threw her arms round him and killed him for joy, but contented herself with slapping him on the back and saying, "that's first rate, old fellow!"

Arthur was certainly very attentive to Frank, and, strange to say, Mr. Lubbuck seemed to like it. Arthur and Frank used to have a great many arguments on medical and other topics—Frank was every inch a man in her love of argument—and the old man would sit and listen, nodding approval, and occasionally putting in a word. At first he used to keep Jessie by him, but Arthur tried hard to keep his implied promise to Mr. Lubbuck, and scarcely spoke to that young lady, except the most commonplace civilities. After a little while Frank discovered that Arthur played chess, and claimed him frequently for a game, while Jessie either sat quietly by, pretending to do some fancy work or would steal off to the piano and play over old-fashioned airs softly to herself. Although they met frequently now, Jessie and Arthur

had really less opportunity of speaking to each other than when he and Charlie Benson used to meet Frank and Jessie for little pleasant walks ; each seemed to avoid the other, for Jessie felt hurt that Arthur did not pay her more attention, and Arthur was very careful to remember, if possible, Mr. Lubbuck's warning. Try as he would, however, it was no use ; the mere fact of her presence, a turn of her head, a glance of her eye, would attract his whole attention at once ; when he was playing chess with Frank at one end of the room and Jessie was singing at the other, he would bend all his attention to catch the lowest murmur of her voice, or the softest note she touched. Often Miss Frank would take him to task for his absent-mindedness ; and numerous were the pennies that young lady offered for his thoughts without having her stock of pocket-money reduced.

About six weeks after Arthur had paid his first visit to Mr. Lubbuck's he was sitting one evening playing chess with Frank, with Mr. Lubbuck looking on and Jessie singing softly to herself. Mrs. Williams was not very well, and had excused herself after dinner. Presently a servant came to speak to Mr. Lubbuck about one of the horses having gone lame, and he went out to consult with the groom. Jessie had been singing very softly, so softly that Arthur had been unable to catch a word, but as her uncle left the room she raised her voice a little and sang clearly and distinctly a scrap of a simple little ballad :

"Have you forgotten the stroll by the fountain ;  
Have you forgotten the path o'er the lea ;  
Have you forgotten those days on the mountain ;  
Have you forgotten them all, with them me ?"

Arthur sat silently listening while the simple strain lasted, foolishly holding his queen in his hand, and at last making the very worst move on the board, putting it immediately in the way of Frank's queen. That young lady promptly captured the unlucky queen, and crying "Checkmate," rose from the table, saying :

"Mr. Austin, you don't seem to care about playing chess to-night, and I want to read ; make yourself useful by turning over Jessie's music for her."

She threw herself into an easy chair and took up a book, but she did not read ; the book was only intended as a blind, under the cover of which she might observe what was going on at the other end of the room. The fact is Miss Frank had noticed Arthur's absent manner, his wrapt attention to Jessie's singing, and his eager watching of her every movement, and she made a pretty

good guess as to the state of his feelings. Don't suppose Frank felt the least bit jealous, she liked Arthur Austin very much, he was a sensible fellow, could talk well, and had many tastes and pursuits in common with her, but Miss Frank never for one moment fancied herself in love with him; in fact she was more in love than she cared to confess with some one else, and it was as much to pique that some one else as anything that she had thrown herself in Arthur's way so much. So she quietly watched behind her book and awaited developments. Arthur sauntered as unconcernedly as he could up to the piano, and, leaning over Jessie, said:

"Will you please sing that 'Have you forgotten' again, it is so sweet?"

"I'm sorry I interrupted your game of chess, Mr. Austin, pray do not let me disturb you."

"I was only too glad to be interrupted so pleasantly, Miss Jessie; won't you, please, repeat that song?"

"Frank will expect you to finish your game," said Jessie, rather spitefully.

"Miss Frank herself gave up playing, and desired me to come and turn over your music."

"Have you quarrelled with Frank?"

"Certainly not; what could make you think so?"

"When people who are so fond of each other, and are so much together, suddenly separate, it looks—it looks," continued Jessie, as if she doubted whether to say the next words or not, "as if they had had a lovers' quarrel." She finished, desperately, savagely intoning the "lovers."

"Lovers' quarrel!" Why, Miss Jessie, what on earth can you mean?"

"Why, you and Frank are so much together and so much—that everybody—well, it looks as if—" said Jessie, with a rising sensation in her throat, and tears almost starting into her eyes.

"You never thought so, Miss Jessie, did you?" said Arthur, bending earnestly over her.

"Why, of course, I — I —."

"Jessie, darling, how could you fancy such a thing. I admire your sister, of course, but you must have seen, must know, although I have never told you so in words, that I love, never can love any one but you. I know I have acted strangely of late, but I was forced to it by a feeling of respect to the wishes of your uncle, who

almost made me promise to avoid you. I tried, tried hard to tear you from my heart, darling—but it was impossible, the more I tried the more I loved you. Jessie, I am only a clerk, and shall lose my best chance of advancement by this step, but I have health and strength, and, with the hope of your smile to cheer me on, I will succeed. Will you give me one word of hope, one smile to show me I am not wholly indifferent to you?"

"And you don't love Frank?" said Jessie, bending over the piano until her glowing face was almost hidden by her falling hair.

"No one but you, darling. Oh! Jessie, will you give me one word, one look. Will you promise one day to be my wife?" Jessie said nothing, but raised her eyes, swimming with happy tears, to his, her cheeks glowing with burning blushes and a bright smile playing around her lips. She half rose from the piano stool, and in another moment Arthur had clasped her to his heart and imprinted a burning kiss on her glowing lips.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Miss Frank, bringing her book down on the table with a bang which caused the lovers to spring apart, and Jessie to run over to her sister and hide her face on her shoulder—"this is more than I bargained for; I did not think matters had gone so far as that."

"Oh! Frank," half sobbed Jessie, "I'm so sorry—and I'm so happy—and Arthur didn't mean —"

"I hope, Miss Frank," said Arthur, "that my conduct of late has not deceived you; I know it was wrong, but I promised your uncle to avoid Jessie, and I hope—"

"That I have not fallen in love with you; make your mind easy on that score. I like you very well, you're a sensible fellow, and will make a first-rate brother-in-law. I think you are just suited for Jessie, and I give my consent."

"But your uncle?"

"Oh, he's very fond of Jessie and won't want to part with her, but he'll get over it. I'll manage him, if I have to give him a dose of physic to make him sick."

\* \* \* \* \*

Frank was as good as her word, and succeeded much easier than she had expected. Mr. Lubbuck held out for a little while, and required, as conditions to his consent, that Jessie should not leave him, but Arthur come and live with them; and, also, that the wedding should not take place for a year; to both of which pro-

posals Frank unconditionally surrendered. Before Mr. Lubbuck finally gave his consent to Jessie's marriage, he wrote on to New York to an old confidential friend, and had private inquiries instituted as to Arthur Austin's antecedents,—for he did not intend to give his pet niece to a man he had picked out of the Recorder's Court, without taking good care to know who he was and all about him. The information he received was highly satisfactory. He found that Arthur had come to New York about ten years before with his father, who was sent out as travelling clerk for an English banking-house, but who soon gave up that and went into business for himself as a gold broker, in Broad street, and was highly successful, amassing a large fortune in a short time. Arthur joined him in the business, and, by lucky speculations, managed to make a great deal of money; his speculations were bold and daring, and at the time of his coming of age, and being admitted as a partner in his father's business, he was judged to be worth nearly one million of dollars. Six months after the tide of speculation turned, the close of the war paralysed Wall Street for a time, and Austin & Son were one of the firms which hopelessly failed. Over-speculation had done its work, and both father and son were ruined. The shock so affected Arthur's father that he had an attack of brain fever, from the effects of which he died. Arthur, not wishing to begin at the bottom of the ladder in a place where he had once held so high a position, resolved to go to Chicago and re-commence life as a clerk. About this time he began to acquire habits of intemperance, which had clung to him till he came to Montreal. Nothing whatever was known against his character or morals, except his intemperance, and, as Mr. Lubbuck was quite satisfied on that head now, he gave his consent.

When two young hearts are anxious to be mated, and are aided and abetted by a masculine feminine of a medical turn of mind, it must be a very obdurate old gentleman, indeed, who could long resist. Mr. Lubbuck was not obdurate, and, consequently, he soon agreed to waive the provision in his consent, by which the young people had to wait a year; indeed, he had changed his mind entirely on that point, for he insisted that they should be united as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made.

Of course he had a motive for this; staid old gentlemen don't change their minds so suddenly and completely without some good reason, and this was Mr. Lubbuck's reason: The firm of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. was a branch of an English house, Lowry, Lub-

buck & Lownds, the said Lownds being a young man, son of the former head of the house, and also partner in the firm of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. One fine morning it got into old Mr. Lowry's head that he wanted to die, and so he died right off, leaving Stephen Lubbuck his executor, and bequeathing to him the bulk of his large fortune.

Mr. Lowry, like his partner, was a bachelor; and he had no near relative that he cared about. When Mr. Lubbuck received information of his partner's death, he saw that he must at once go to England to settle up his affairs, and, probably, to make arrangements for residing there permanently, as head of the firm. A few mornings after he received the intelligence he called Arthur Austin into his private office, and said :—

“ Arthur, I have received news of the death of my old friend Lowry ; he has left me his executor, and I shall be obliged to go to England for some time, probably for several months. I shall sail on 13th November, you must be married on 29th October, and must return from your wedding tour before I leave. I shall give you a power of attorney to represent the firm during my absence, and you will, of course, take charge of my house while I'm away. Mr. Lownds may perhaps come out to take charge during the winter, but he will not remain long. I shall return in the spring, and then we shall see about re-constructing the firm. How do you think Lubbuck, Austin & Co. would sound, eh ? ”

\* \* \* \* \*

The wedding took place in Christ Chürch Cathedral, and was a very grand affair ; Frank was chief bridesmaid, and looked supremely uncomfortable, as she did not know whether or not to be exceedingly happy or perfectly miserable. Charlie Benson was groomsman, and took such a deep interest in the service that one might think he was rehearsing for his own benefit. A wedding is a stupid thing to describe, so I shall simply say that the Rev. Canon Baldwin united the happy pair, and the ceremony proceeded in the usual way.

As the wedding party was about entering the church, a seedy looking individual, who was apparently sauntering purposeless down St. Catherine street, approached, evidently attracted by curiosity only. He was a peculiar looking individual ; his hair was red, and he wore it very long, but it was brushed to the most exasperating degree of smoothness, and, indeed, appeared to have been literally “ plastered ” to his head and then pressed down with

a hot iron, so smooth and glossy did it appear; his red whiskers were very luxuriant, and were brushed as carefully as his hair; his dress was seedy in the extreme, and his thread-bare coat was buttoned close up to his throat as if to hide any want of clean linen, but every garment was shining from the effect of frequent brushing, and not one speck of dirt could be noticed on him. His dilapidated old hat was tipped jauntily on one side, and he carried a mean looking scrubby little cane with the air of a swell. He was quite close to the wedding party when Arthur Austin got out of his carriage, and as soon as the dilapidated individual saw him he gave so natural and unexpected a start that the jaunty hat very nearly tumbled into the gutter, "Saints alive, can it be possible? Arthur Austin, as I'm a living sinner! Evidently in clover too, dear boy, and about to be spliced to a very charming young lady. How well the dear boy is looking too, and dressed in such unexceptionable togs. I must do myself the honor of witnessing the nuptial ceremony."

He entered the church, and keeping well behind one of the pillars to escape observation, watched the ceremony to its conclusion. Waiting until the happy party had departed, he strolled leisurely up to the sexton and began conversing with him:

"An exceedingly nice affair, and most excellently conducted, thanks to your admirable arrangements. May I inquire who are the happy parties?"

"Mr. Arthur Austin and Miss Jessie Williams. A very nice young gentleman," continued the sexton, thinking of the liberal fee Arthur had slipped into his hand.

"Undoubtedly so; and rich seemingly."

"Bless you, no! He is only her uncle's clerk, but her uncle is enormously rich, and very fond of the young man."

"Dear me, how interesting! And the uncle is?—"

"Mr. Stephen Lubbuck, one of the richest men in Montreal; they say he is worth over two hundred thousand dollars."

"Is he? Then he has two hundred thousand additional claims to my esteem. The happy pair go on a wedding tour, I suppose?"

"They go to New York by this afternoon's train, but won't stay long, as Mr. Lubbuck goes to England shortly, and Mr. Austin must return before then. Excuse me, sir, I must close the church."

"Certainly, my dear sir, certainly; business before pleasure, as we say in the classics. Allow me to wish you a good day, and to thank you for your kindness."

“Two hundred thousand dollars!” soliloquized the seedy stranger as he stood in the porch of the church, “here’s a windfall! Mr. Robert Brydon allow me to congratulate you; and he shook hands with himself. “Very lucky thing for you,” Bob; things were getting to a very low ebb, but now the tide has turned with a vengeance. You always were a lucky fellow, Bob, but this beats all. How surprised the dear boy will be. Well, Montreal is a nice place, rather dull for a man of fashion like myself, but it will do. I shall hang my hat,” he continued, taking off his dilapidated head covering and looking at it, “no, not this hat, but a new one I mean to buy, and prepare to spend the rest of my natural days in Montreal, and lead a virtuous, happy and peaceful life. Mr. Austin, I shall do myself the honor of calling on you as soon as you return from your pleasant trip.”

He tucked the scrubby-looking cane affectionately under his arm, tipped the dilapidated hat the least bit over his right eye, and walked jauntily away.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OUT OF THE CANTEEN.

THE wedding trip of Arthur and Jessie was a short but a very happy one. Once in a while a shadow of an old sorrow would flit across the brain of Arthur, but one glance at the bright, joyous face by his side would quickly dispel the vision, and he would be gay and happy again. As for Jessie, all the warm impassioned love of her nature thawed naturally and quietly out under the influence of the sun of her adoration. Their holiday was brief—scarce two weeks—but they thoroughly enjoyed it. There is scarcely any city, except, perhaps, Paris, when Paris was at her zenith, where two weeks can be more thoroughly enjoyed by persons who have no business but pleasure than they can be in New York. The splendid vistas of streets, the magnificent buildings, the teeming population, all so earnest and busy; the glories of Central Park, the calm quiet repose of Greenwood, the flash and glow of the theatres, the splendors of the opera, the roar and bustle of Broadway, the vivid vitality of the whole place, tends to make up a picture of fascination which it is difficult to rival. Jessie had never been in any larger city than Montreal, and the glories of the opera and the wonders of the theatre were all new pleasures to her, and she drank them in with avidity, and turned from them with regret when the brief holiday had passed away and they were obliged to return. Although her life had been a happy one yet it seemed to her she had never known what true happiness was until within these two weeks. Still she was not sorry to return to Montreal, as she pictured quieter domestic joys which would more than compensate for the giddy round of pleasure she was experiencing.

Mr. Lubbuck sailed for England at the time specified and left Arthur Austin in full charge of the business, unless Mr. Lownds should take a fancy to visit Canada. Mr. Lubbuck expected to be absent about a year, and Arthur was duly installed as master of his house during his absence. The old gentleman had taken care to raise Arthur's salary to a liberal figure, so that he might not feel dependent on his wife, whose settlement had been a very liberal one, securing her \$2,000 a year during her uncle's lifetime

and one-half of his fortune at his death. It was about a week after Mr. Lubbuck had sailed that Arthur was walking up Jacques Cartier square when he felt a hand laid lightly on his shoulder, and a voice which sounded familiar saluted him with :

“ Dear boy, how magnificently you are looking; allow me to congratutate you on your improved appearance and also on your improved prospects. I had the pleasure of witnessing that interesting little ceremony at the Cathedral a couple of weeks ago, and I assure you it affected me deeply.

“ Why, Bob, old fellow, I am astonished to see you, and should certainly never have recognized you, your appearance has so much changed, you look so—so—”

“ Seedy, dear boy, don’t be delicate about expressions! Confoundedly seedy, if you feel in a humor for using adjectives. I confess the fact, “dear boy; luck has run dead against me, and I believe I am the most impecunious and seedy individual in Montreal.”

“ I am really sorry to hear that, and you know, old fellow, you have only to call on me for any help you need, but where have you been these last two years that I have never heard from you; and how did you come to Montreal ?”

“ Dear boy, one question at a time; the story is long, and standing here is not pleasant, let us adjourn to a quiet retreat I know in the neighbourhood where we can obtain food for the body as well as the mind, and where we will not be disturbed.”

They walked down Notre Dame street to Claude, and down that almost to St. Paul, when Brydon stopped in front of Joe Beef’s canteen.

“ Let us enter,” he said, “the exterior is not inviting, and the interior is very little more so, but it is cheap, very cheap, and, as a natural consequence, extremely acceptable to a man whose finances are in a chronic state of consumption; the fare is simple, but nutritious, and wonderfully filling,—a little of it goes a long way. Let us enter.”

“ No,” said Arthur, “ I do not believe in visiting saloons; and I don’t like the appearance of this one.”

“ Mere prejudice, dear boy. Enter and refresh your drooping spirits with the bounding cocktail, or the foaming tankard. Besides,” he added in more serious tones, “ I have something very particular to say to you.”

"You have certainly selected a very curious place," said Arthur, "but it makes little difference to me."

They entered, not the saloon where two rotten cheeses, a heap of ham knuckles, and piles of flat-looking bread, bountifully displayed on the counter, were the pervading features, but a side room which bore over its entrance door the pretentious sign, "Oyster-saloon, meals, etc."

It was a low, dark, mean-looking room, furnished with a few heavy square tables and some benches and chairs, in one corner stood a platform which looked as if it had been used for a piano, if the place had ever been a music hall, and the walls were ornamented with a few rude pictures on sporting subjects. Mr. Brydon led the way to a side table, and sat with the air of a man who "had been there before." Arthur sat opposite him, and awaited with some impatience the communication which Brydon said he had to make to him.

Mr. Brydon settled the seedy-looking hat firmly on his head, dived into one pocket and produced an old clay pipe, black with age; into another, and brought out a handful of tobacco, filled the pipe, and carefully returned the few grains left in his hand to his pocket. He then dived into another pocket and, producing a match, lighted his pipe and took two or three contemplative whiffs.

Arthur Austin had known Robert Brydon for many years, they had been school-mates together, and Brydon had been for some time in the office of Arthur's father when Arthur himself was a clerk there. He had left the office under rather suspicious circumstances, a cheque had been forged for a small sum, and suspicion had for some time been thrown on Arthur Austin, but a thorough investigation showed Mr. Brydon as the probable culprit, the case was not very clear against him, and Mr. Austin contented himself with simply discharging him. Brydon took the discharge in the light of an injustice, and tried hard to throw the guilt on Arthur, but Mr. Austin so scouted the idea that he quickly changed his tactics, and tried to conciliate the friend he had endeavored to abuse. Arthur was of an easy, forgiving disposition and soon forgot the injustice and wrong Brydon had tried to do him. At that time Arthur was rather wild—as young men with plenty of money generally will be—and Brydon soon established himself as his boon companion. They had numerous "sprees" together, and Brydon was closely connected in a transaction which Arthur had

every desire to blot from his memory, and every wish to keep concealed from the rest of the world. Brydon after he left Mr. Austin, had for a while run a faro bank on the Bowery; but some ugly tales had been told to the police, and one night a descent was made on it, and the proprietor and inmates arrested. It does not take much trouble or ingenuity—but generally a good deal of money—for the keeper of a New York faro bank to escape from the clutches of a New York Judge, and so Robert Brydon suffered nothing more than a heavy fine, and the confiscation of his “lay out,” “checks, &c.” He remained about New York for a few months after this, figuring conspicuously as a “sport,” attending the races, driving a fast team in the Park, wearing a big diamond pin in his shirt bosom, and otherwise playing the heavy swell. Then he disappeared, and Arthur Austin had seen or heard nothing of him for over two years, when they suddenly met in Jacques Cartier Square. When Brydon left New York Arthur Austin was at the height of his success, and reputed to be enormously wealthy. In a few months more a collapse had come, and he was reduced to almost beggary. What Brydon had been doing in these two years and a half, and what had reduced him from the gay cavalier to the seedy individual he now was, were matters of conjecture to Arthur Austin.

“Sit down, dear boy, and refresh,” said Mr. Brydon. “Allow me to recommend the beer; the presence of water is plainly recognizable, but it retains some of its ancient flavor and is not bad, all things considered. Mr. Beef,” continued he, as that personage entered the room, “will you oblige me with one of your excellent steaks and a tankard of mulled ale. My friend will take—”

“Nothing, thanks,” said Arthur. “I do not need any lunch, and I never take any intoxicating liquor.”

“Phew,” whistled Mr. Beef, “you’re a cold water customer, are you? Well, I shouldn’t wonder if you were,” he continued, with a supercilious glance, “you look like it.”

“Dear boy, dear boy,” said Mr. Brydon, “you don’t mean to say that you have come the cold water dodge! Sorry to hear it, very; it ruins the coating of the stomach, and brings a man to an early and uncomfortable grave. You won’t take anything? then I must drink alone. Mr. Beef would you oblige me by seeing that that steak is fat and of fair proportion, I feel slightly peckish.”

"Yes, you generally do feel 'peckish' when you come in here," responded Mr. Beef, as he went into the bar-room to execute the order. Before leaving the room, however, he took the poker out of the coal-scuttle, gave it a preliminary wipe with his handkerchief and put it in the stove.

"Brydon, what is it you want to say to me, and why did you come here to say it?" asked Arthur Austin, as soon as they were alone.

"Dear boy, what a trick you have of asking two or three questions at once. One at a time will last much longer, and give me so much more of your company."

"I have no time to wait, what do you want? Do you want money?"

"Dear boy, your last remark is the most sensible one you have made yet. I have for some time past been in a chronic condition of wanting money."

"Well, you know, Bob, you have only to tell me how much you want, and if it is possible for me to accommodate you I will do so."

"Dear boy, your kindness overpowers me. Suppose we say 'a tenner' to begin with. I have a most unexceptionable suit of togs, for which I paid—no, I mean *owe*—Brooks Brothers fifty-five dollars; and an obliging relative of mine in Montreal—in fact, my uncle—was considerate enough to lend me three dollars and a half on them. With those released, and a new pair of boots, 'Richard will be himself again.' No, stop, not quite himself. I promised myself a new hat to hang up in Montreal, perhaps you wouldn't mind adding another V so that I may keep my promise."

Arthur Austin took out his pocket book and counted out four five dollar bills which he handed to Brydon, saying, "Bob, you know I have been under pretty heavy expense lately, and my funds are running low. I will let you have all I can spare, twenty dollars, and if I can be of any further use to you, you can command me. I will be wanted at the office, so I must leave you."

"Dear boy, you are generosity itself, but do not go just yet. I have something to tell you which it is important for you to hear."

Further conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Beef, artistically arrayed in his shirt sleeves, bearing a pewter mug of ale in one hand and a red herring suspended by the tail in the other. He placed the mug on the table, took a plate from a cupboard and skilfully "slung" it along the table until it stopped

in front of Mr. Brydon. He then proceeded to the stove and drawing out the poker, returned to the table and said :

“ Here’s your two-eyed beefsteak and your mulled ale,” at the same time bringing the herring down with a smart slap on the plate, and plunging the poker into the ale, which foamed and hissed tremendously.

“ And very excellent they appear to be, good Mr. Beef,” said Mr. Brydon. “ May I trouble you for a cracker and the mustard ? ”

“ Here’s a cracker, there ain’t any mustard. I’ll trouble you for five cents.”

“ He’s too civil a chap by half,” muttered Mr. Beef to himself as he went back to the bar, “ and I don’t like the looks of him, though he has been here pretty often the last two weeks, and always paid his way like a man.”

“ Now, Brydon, what is it you want to say to me ? ”

“ Dear boy, don’t be impetuous, this herring is excellent, and so is my appetite; the beer is thin, but; I am thirsty: allow me to refresh.”

Arthur sat silently thinking for a few minutes whilst Brydon “refreshed.” He was thinking over his friend’s manner which did not impress him favorably. He knew Robert Brydon thoroughly, and although he would lend him money for “Auld lang syne,” or do him a good turn if he could, he would not trust him. He was aware of one or two dark spots in Mr. Brydon’s career, and he placed little confidence in him. He also remembered that Brydon was fully acquainted with an unpleasant episode in his own career, which he wished to forget but could not, and, spite of himself, the man’s presence in Montreal gave him an unpleasant, anxious feeling. What had brought him to Canada? Perhaps some sort of misconduct in the States, but what could it be that he wanted to say to him ?

“ Brydon,” said Arthur, at last, “ you have very nearly finished that herring, and my time is precious, what is it you have to tell me ? ”

“ Excellent refreshment, and filling at the price,” said Mr. Brydon, quite imperturbably, “ but rather dry and needing more fluid to wash it down. Mr. Beef, will you oblige me with another mug of beer, cold this time, the poker imparted rather a greasy flavor to the last lot. Now, dear boy,” he continued, after his mug had been replenished and he had taken a good pull at it, “ pardon

my keeping you in suspense, but what I have to say is serious, and I prefer entering upon a serious subject on a full stomach, it gives one more confidence. Dear boy, that was a very pleasant ceremony I witnessed the other day, and I congratulate you on your good taste; Mrs. Austin No. 2 is certainly a very charming little lady, and I do not wonder at your susceptible heart being captured by her beauty, without taking into account the ulterior attraction of her uncle's fortune."

"I do not see what my wife's personal appearance has to do with the matter," said Arthur very stiffly, "pray come to the point."

"Dear boy, that's just what I am coming to, but the point very nearly concerns Mrs. Austin No. 2, and, therefore, I am forced to mention her."

"What do you mean by calling my wife Mrs. Austin No. 2?"

"Simply, dear boy, that there is a Mrs. Austin No. 1."

"Was you mean, not *is*; there is no use dragging up that old story of my folly and its punishment. I will save you the trouble of repeating the tale of how a beardless boy, not twenty, became enamored of a pretty ballet dancer, with a well turned ankle and captivating black eyes; of how he followed her in his infatuation to a small village in Pennsylvania, and, in a moment of madness, married her; of his awaking from his wild dream to find that she was wicked, abandoned, vile, all that a woman should not be, and that he was tied to her for life; of the year of misery that he passed. No, there is no need for you to repeat that old story, I remember it only too well; it is only too deeply engraved on my heart, and is the one dark memory of my life. But, thank God! it is only a memory, death has closed that page of my life and I do not desire to have it re-opened."

"Not the least doubt of it, dear boy, and quite proper on your part, but I fail to understand your allusion to death."

"My wretched wife died four years ago, just about the time of the failure of Austin & Son. Oh! don't look incredulous, I have a letter from the doctor who attended her and the undertaker who buried her; the letter enclosed bills which I paid; but although the gentlemen were prompt enough to send me their bills, they were never polite to forward receipts for the money. I also saw an announcement of my wife's death in a Savannah paper, in which place she was playing at the time. Besides, you know, I was allowing my wife \$2,000 a year at that time, and her quarterly

allowance has not since been claimed, not that I could have paid it, because our failure left me without the means to do so, but because there was no one to pay it to."

"What a wonderful memory the dear boy has," said Mr. Brydon rather mockingly, "but incorrect as to facts. Miss Effie Barron, or, to speak more correctly, Mrs. Austin No. 1, must be a very remarkable person to die in Savannah four years ago, and to have been alive and well in New York two months ago when I had the pleasure of seeing her."

"Alive!" shouted Arthur Austin, starting from his chair.

"Not the least doubt of it, dear boy, alive and kicking, absolutely kicking, for I saw her kick a bell-boy at the St. Charles Hotel because he refused to furnish a couple of brandies and soda without payment in advance."

"It's a lie."

"Perfectly true, dear boy, perfectly true; the doctor's and the undertaker's letters and bills were ingenious forgeries, very neatly executed by a friend of yours who desired to relieve your mind of a load of grief. Your first wife is alive and very anxious to find you, as she is confoundedly hard up and would like her allowance renewed. The pleasant little ceremony I witnessed at the Cathedral was, no doubt, very enjoyable to you; but it was a sad mistake for you, dear boy; it is an awkward thing to commit bigamy."

"Bigamy! Oh Heavens! Poor Jessie, poor Jessie!" exclaimed Arthur, clasping his head in his hands and leaning forward on the table; "My poor little darling!"

"Yes, yes, it is rather hard on the little lady with the golden hair; but it is rather harder on the other lady, Mrs. Austin No. 1."

"Robert Brydon," said Arthur rising, and looking at his companion with a vengeful, dangerous look, "I know you to be a scoundrel, a thief, a liar, and an unprincipled adventurer."

"Don't be complimentary, dear boy, please don't, or you will make me blush."

"You will remember," continued Arthur, "that I induced my father to spare you once when you forged his name. I have always been your friend in good repute and evil repute. I would even be your friend now, for we played together as children, and grew up almost as brothers; but, by Heaven, if you are hatching any of your infernal plots against me I will hound you to death like a dog. You are trying to raise the phantom of my past misery to blight the happiness of the present, but have a care! I

know enough of your past life to send you to prison, and I will do it if you try to annoy me."

"Don't, dear boy, don't, I have been there, and I can't say I like it; the grub is meagre, and their drink is bad,—only water, and poor at that. I have resided in Sing Sing two years and have no desire to return there, besides, dear boy, you forget I am quite safe in Canada, although I might be in danger in the States."

"What does your story mean?" said Arthur, restraining himself with an effort, and again taking his seat. "Is it an attempt to extort money from me?"

"Extort money," said Mr. Brydon, suddenly changing his manner, and rising and speaking with great force and emphasis, totally different from his former quiet, bantering style. "To extort money? yes; but it is more than that, Arthur Austin, it is to pay off an old score. I have had a debt of hate against you for a long time and I mean to pay it, Arthur Austin. You have crossed my path three times in my life, and I mean to lie down across yours for the rest of your or my existence, so that you cannot get rid of me. "Excuse me, dear boy," he continued, suddenly changing his manner again and resuming his seat, "I am afraid I was a little excited; I hope you will pardon me, and allow me to tell you a little story. Can you remember twelve years ago, Arthur Austin, when we were at school together? Can you remember how you bullied me? I can. Do you remember thrashing me? I do. Do you think I have ever forgotten those days, no, no, I remember well every blow you gave me, every cross or hard word you used, and I swore then that when I came to manhood I would return you 'blow for blow' and I mean to keep my oath. Oh! I kept on good terms with you, was always your good friend, but it was only because the nearer I was to you, the deeper I could strike. My first blow failed. You remarked just now that I forged your father's name. I did, yes, I forged his name and tried to throw the guilt on you. I failed, and was discharged,—that was the second time you crossed my path. I still kept on good terms with you and bided my time. One night I was fool enough to introduce to you the girl on whom I had set my heart, and who I believed loved me. Your baby face, your smooth, plausible manner and your wealth, won her from me. You married her. Well, Effie Barron never was a good lot, and you found that out very shortly after your marriage, when the scales had dropped from your eyes. You tried to get divorced from her, but Miss Effie was too

clever to have committed any act since her marriage which gave you any legal claim to cast her off. Oh, no! virago, devil, as she was, she was too clever to give you the power to throw her aside when you discovered what she had been. Bad as she was—and none knew better than I how bad—I loved her wildly, passionately, loved her then, love her now, and shall always love her.” He had spoken fiercely, his voice gaining depth and passion, although it was only slightly raised. He paused now, overcome by genuine emotion, his voice almost choked by the thick quick sobs which rose to his throat. Any one looking at him now would scarcely have recognized the easy-going self-possessed cynical individual who had been speaking a few minutes before. After a short pause he continued: “When she first told me she was going to marry you, I meant to shoot you. I waited for you one whole night outside her house but you did not visit her. I dogged your footsteps for three whole days, watching for an opportunity to murder you, and finding none. Then I changed my mind. Death was too quick a punishment for you. I would wait and seek some more lasting means of torturing you as you tortured me. You will remember, dear boy,” he continued, again changing to his light, playful manner, “that I assisted at that little ceremony at which Miss Effie Barron became Mrs. Austin No. 1; I assisted at one or two of the amusing little matrimonial squabbles in which you indulged; I assisted in furnishing you information about your wife’s former character; I assisted in defeating your application for divorce, and I assisted at some thing else which you did not suspect—your wife’s funeral which never took place.” He was speaking earnestly and bitterly again, and the wicked, devilish look was on his face. “After your separation from your wife she returned to the stage—she could scarcely be said to have ever left it—and I met her. I had some money then, and I could afford to pay for a whim. I thought that if death relieved you of your wife, or, to speak more correctly, if you supposed death had relieved you, you would probably marry again. I proposed a scheme to Effie,—she loved you none too well, and joined with me readily. I wrote the letters and bills you received. I prepared the advertisement for the Savannah papers, which, by the way, was contradicted next day, although you did not see that. I laid my plan carefully, and then I came North and was with you in New York when you received the letters which had been posted by Effie herself. I remember well your joy at their receipt, and I expected to see you a married

man in less than a year, but your confounded failure drove you from New York and spoiled your chance of marrying again for some time. I thought I was foiled again, but fortune has favored me at last. You are married now—married well and wealthily; and I hold the dagger in my hand which can fall and destroy your happiness and commit you to prison whenever I please; and I please to keep the dagger suspended above you."

Brydon had risen to his feet, and his voice had grown in intensity and power, although only slightly raised, but it contained all the concentrated force of long pent-up feeling. As he stood bending over Arthur Austin, whose head had drooped on his crossed arms on the table, with his right arm uplifted, he seemed as if he really fancied he held a dagger in his hand, and only hesitated a moment before plunging it into his companion's heart. He recovered himself quickly, however, and, resuming his seat, said in more quiet accents: "I have been a little violent, excuse me; you seem slightly overpowered, will you take something to steady your nerves?"

"Brandy!" said Arthur in so hoarse and unnatural a voice that Mr. Brydon involuntarily started.

"Mr. Beef," Brydon called, "will you oblige me with a glass of your best brandy, and another glass of beer?"

The drinks were brought and Arthur tossed the brandy down at one gulp, and ordered his glass filled again. When the second glass had been swallowed in the same manner, he turned to Brydon and said:

"What do you mean by what you have told me? what do you want? you did not lay so clever and diabolical a plan for nothing."

"Quite right, dear boy, quite right, it is wonderful how the brandy has cleared your powers of perception." The man had entirely recovered his equanimity again, and spoke in his usual bantering style: "I certainly did not expend so much time, money and ingenuity without some definite plan of remuneration. One motive I have already told you, the other I will now explain, and I shall do it in the fewest possible words: I want to be provided for."

"Provided for?"

"That is exactly the idea, dear boy, I see you understand it perfectly."

"You are mistaken if you suppose I can support you in idleness;

I am only a clerk working for a fair but not large salary. My wife—”

“Mrs. Austin No. 2,” interrupted Mr. Brydon.

“My wife,” continued Arthur Austin speaking very quietly, has an allowance until her uncle’s death, and will then receive one half of his fortune; but not one penny of that money shall you ever touch.”

“Certainly not, dear boy, certainly not; your sentiment does you infinite honor; you are doubtless thinking of the necessary provision to be made for a prospective group of charming little Austins, all with their mother’s golden hair and bright blue eyes.”

“Cease speaking in your sneering way of my wife, or I dare you to do your worst.”

“Sneering! You mistake, dear boy, I greatly respect your charming lady.”

“Your proposition is nonsensical, I am unable to support you in idleness.”

“Idleness! dear boy, you labor under a delusion. I never said anything about idleness. I proposed that you should provide for me; but, of course, I intended that you should do so in some easy, pleasant way. Do I look like an idle man? I flatter myself I look like an energetic man. I only want some nice quiet place where there is little or nothing to do, and good pay for doing it. Surely you can assist me to some such place. Get me a contract with the Corporation, or a good fat berth under Government where there will be nothing to do but draw my pay.”

“I cannot assist you in that way, I have no influence. Brydon, I may as well speak plainly with you.”

“Do, dear boy, I admire candor, and always practice it myself.”

“I do not believe this story of yours. I regard it all as a base fabrication invented to wring money from my fears. I shall sift this matter thoroughly, and if I find you have told me the truth I will be forced, I suppose, to—to—”

“Make terms, dear boy, make terms, that is the correct expression.”

“Make terms; yes, I suppose so, for I cannot give Jessie up.”

“Nothing further from my wishes, dear boy; don’t think for a minute of giving her up.”

“But if I find you have attempted to play on my feelings, and extort money from me, I shall hunt you down as I would any other mean, contemptible cur.”

"Don't use bad words, dear boy, you hurt my feelings. You doubt my word also, that hurts my feelings again ; perhaps you can believe your own eye-sight. You think your first wife is dead, here is a letter written by her to me about three months ago ; excuse the caligraphy and orthography, dear boy ; and also a few ornate embellishments, in the way of oaths, etc., for which I am in no way responsible, they are the exclusive property of Mrs. Austin No. 1.

Arthur took the letter, glanced at it, and his cheek blanched, there was scarcely any mistaking that struggling hand, and that supreme disregard of Lindley Murray. It brought back unpleasant memories, and seemed to him like a message from the dead. He read it through twice ; the first time with a dead feeling of fear and misery at his heart, the second with a slight flush on his cheek and a bright sparkle in his eye. As he read the letter a second time, hope whispered to him that there was a way out of his difficult and dangerous position which he could accomplish without the aid of Mr. Robert Brydon. That gentleman watched him keenly, and, as Arthur handed him back the letter with a smile, he said :

"Amusing, dear boy, is'n't it ? I could not help smiling myself when I read the affectionate terms in which Mrs. Austin No. 1 writes of you. You seem elated too, dear boy ; you think you have found a way to untie the Gordian knot ; don't have any such fancy. I can tell you what you have been thinking. You have noticed one or two expressions in that letter which lead you to believe that you can renew that pleasant little divorce suit with a better chance of success by making your humble servant correspondent ; quite an error, dear boy. Even if you could prove that Mrs. Austin No. 1 had been unfaithful that would not improve the position of Mrs. Austin No. 2, you would still have committed bigamy by marrying her before you were divorced from Mrs. Austin No. 1. And again, the moment you institute proceedings for divorce that moment my dagger falls, and Mrs. Austin No. 2 is made aware of the fact that she is not married at all. You see the position, dear boy ; I am prepared for any emergency."

"What can I do ?"

"What I have already proposed to you ; provide for me."

"I cannot."

"You must."

"Brydon, I shall begin to-morrow to inquire into the truth of

what you have been telling me. It will take a week or ten days to find out whether it is true or not; meanwhile, I will supply you with what money I can spare. What guarantee do you give me that you will keep faith with me?"

"My word of honor, dear boy, my word of honor."

"Your word of honor; that is worth a great deal, is'nt it?"

"Don't be cynical, dear boy; well my personal advantage then, for if the cat jumps out of the bag, my supplies are cut off, don't you see; and, therefore, it is my best policy to keep a still tongue and quietly bleed you."

"And Effie?"

"Shall receive a letter from your humble servant, dated from New Orleans, informing her that I have traced you to that city only to find that you had gone to Rio Janeiro, or Buenos Ayres, or Hong Kong, or Honolulu, or any other place you might prefer; and if she chooses to follow you there she will have a long search, that is all."

"Very well," said Arthur rising, "I must go now; I shall be wanted at the office."

"One moment, dear boy; that word office gives me an idea. You are in charge now that Mr. Lubbuck is away, and you must find your duties rather arduous. You want a bookkeeper; the position will suit me exactly, you can do the work and I will draw the pay; equal division of labor, you see."

"You in Mr. Lubbuck's office! No, no, I don't care to have so much of your company."

"But if I insist."

"We will see about it."

The two men left the canteen together, but separated at the door.

## CHAPTER V.

### OUT OF THE SOBER PATH.

ARTHUR AUSTIN did not go directly to his office, in fact he did not go there for quite a long while. On leaving Brydon he went first to the "Terrapin" and had another drink, then lighted a cigar, walked down to Viger Garden and sat for a long time thinking and smoking. The terrible calamity which had fallen on him had quite unnerved him, and he could scarcely collect his thoughts. Although he affected to, he did not really disbelieve the strange story Brydon had told him. He knew Brydon to be utterly unprincipled and capable of almost any wickedness; and he knew his former wife to be low, cunning and vicious. He remembered her rage and threats when he first discovered her true character, and tried to thrust her from the proud position she had expected to occupy as his wife. After the first shock, therefore, he was not surprised to hear that she had joined Brydon in a scheme of revenge and blackmail on himself. Her ceasing to draw her quarterly allowance had completely fooled him—no doubt Brydon, who was well to do at the time, had made that up to her; for Arthur Austin had seen, what Brydon did not think he had seen, the contradiction in the Savannah papers of the report of Effie Barron's death. It was scarcely a contradiction, merely a line or two saying that they had been misinformed as to her death; but that she was most dangerously ill and not expected to recover. The letters from the doctor and undertaker, added to the fact of her not drawing her quarterly allowance, completely deceived him, and he fully and honestly believed himself free until Brydon had laid bare to him the diabolical plot to which he had been made a victim.

He sat for a long while thinking it over. At first he thought he would make a clean breast of it to Jessie, separate from her for a time, and endeavor again to get a divorce from his wife; but then the publicity, the disgrace, the pain and grief to Jessie, the chance of a criminal prosecution of himself, all rose in terrible array before his vision, and he had not the moral courage to face the dangers that threatened him. He would compromise, he

would conciliate Brydon and endeavor to keep him quiet. He by no means, however, intended to accept Brydon's statement without examination ; and after duly considering the matter he decided to apply to one of the detectives and get him to test the truth of Brydon's story, by making minute inquiries in both New York and Savannah. With this resolution he rose and started at once for the Central Station ; on his way, however, he stopped at the first tavern he came to and took another drink.

From the moment Brydon had told him of the crime he had unconsciously committed he appeared to have become an altered man ; he forgot, in one moment, his vow and the pleasure he had experienced since he had taken the pledge, he forgot his duty to the woman he had sworn to love, honor and cherish, and remembered only that he had a dull, heavy feeling at the heart, and that the old craving for drink was on him again. It was during the excitement and worry of his failure that Arthur Austin had first sought consolation from the bottle ; and when trouble again overtook him he turned again to his old enemy and destroyer, and, without a thought, without a struggle, gave himself up to the power of the liquid demon.

It is one of the most dangerous, and, at the same time, the most incongruous, features of the power of drink, that men instinctively turn to it at the very moment they should most shun it. When the mind is most enervated by some gigantic calamity ; when the brain is temporarily prostrated by some sudden and unexpected blow ; when the physical system is shaken by some great shock ; when the shadow of some dire misfortune throws its pall over mind and body, and mind and body are least able to withstand the attack of the enemy, it is then, above all other times, that men instinctively turn to the arch destroyer who is always lying in wait for them. They drink under the idea that the temporary stupefaction of the brain is relief, and wake from their slumbers only to find their brain on fire, their throats parched, and the grief or sorrow heavier to bear than before. At the very time a man needs all his intellect, all his force of mind, all his moral and physical strength to fight against some great disaster, at that very moment he voluntarily enlists another enemy against him—the most dangerous he can have, for it strengthens all the others.

So it was with Arthur Austin. At the very time he ought to have kept his mind clearest, in order to combat the well-laid schemes of his enemy, he quietly and without a single effort to

save himself, gave way to the domination of drink. Had he looked his trouble in the face like a man, met and combatted it like a man, with a firm faith and trust in God, he could easily have extricated himself from the difficulties in which he was placed; but he enlisted the devil on his side, and from that moment his course was downward, downward to destruction.

It was past five o'clock when Arthur reached the Central Station, and none of the detectives happened to be in. He was told that Cullen would be on duty at night and would be in any time after eight. He then returned to the office where he had not been since one o'clock.

"Mrs. Austin is in the private office," said one of his fellow clerks as he entered.

Arthur went into the office and found Jessie sitting in the large office chair swinging about in it, and tapping her little foot impatiently on the carpet.

"Why, Arthur," she exclaimed starting up, "where have you been so long? I've been waiting for you nearly an hour," and she looked at the little clock over the desk as if to corroborate her statement.

"I have been very busy, darling. I am sorry to have kept you waiting but I could not help it. I will be ready to go with you in a few minutes."

"Is anything the matter, Arthur?" she asked as she came to him and laid her hand on his shoulder, "you do not look well."

"I don't feel very well to-day, darling; I have been worried a good deal about some unpleasant business." He stooped over her and kissed her. Jessie half started from his arms and gave a little cry as she looked suddenly into his flushed face and said, "Oh, Arthur."

"What is it, little one?"

"Oh, Arthur, you've—you've been drinking," she half sobbed as she hid her face on his shoulder.

Arthur paused for a moment and his face flushed with shame, as he thought, for the first time, how weak and culpable he had been. "Not much, darling; I have been very unwell to-day and I took a little brandy medicinally," he added after a little hesitation and a blush at the falsehood he was telling.

"Well, don't do so anymore, Hubby; I don't like people who drink, and I love my Hubby so much and am so proud of him, I

don't want him to do anything which will lower him in the estimation of others."

She said this so sweetly, and clung to him with such a tender, loving clasp, that Arthur groaned in spirit, and had to support himself by holding on to the table to prevent himself from falling. In one moment he felt all the bitterness which he would suffer at being parted from Jessie and all the misery he owed Robert Brydon for his diabolical plot, and if that easy-going individual had been there at the moment, Arthur could have killed him without the slightest compunction.

"Let us go home," he muttered, and they left the office together.

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When Mr. Robert Brydon left the canteen he walked up to the corner of Notre Dame street and soliloquized thus:

"Robert, my boy, allow me to congratulate you; you have opened the campaign nobly, and a great career lies before you. Nothing to do, and well paid for doing it. I like the programme, but I scarcely think I shall stick to it, I am so fond of doing something. The people here seem green and confiding; I should like to introduce them to some of the mysteries of Faro, or Poker, perhaps it would not be a bad idea to open a bank. I'll think about it. Meanwhile, Bob, my boy, you look seedy, confoundedly seedy, and you need a thorough renovation; the trouble is you need so thorough a renovation that it is difficult to determine where it is best to begin. I think it would be best to begin with the shirt. It is so long since I have indulged in the luxury of a clean shirt that I really think I must begin with that."

He purchased a shirt, with a flashy set of cheap jewellery, a pair of boots, a rakish white hat, with a black band around it, a pair of gloves and a cheap cane. He then proceeded to the pawn-broker's where his clothes were pledged, and, having redeemed them, took all his treasures to a house in Bonaventure street where he was living. He decked himself out in gorgeous array, and then consulted the three square inches of dimmed glass which did duty with him as a mirror.

"The get up is pretty good," he said complacently looking down at his pantaloons, and affectionately regarding his well-fitting frock coat; it is a pity, a thousand pities, that I should be deprived of the services of so thorough an artist as the cutter at Brooks Bros., New York, and such confiding people as they are. Ah, well, well, Bob, you can't expect to have everything exactly

as you desire it, you must cultivate some Montreal tailor and do the best you can with him. "The get up is good," he continued after a pause, again looking in the glass, "but the aid of the tonsorial artist is sadly needed. I must take a stroll as far as the Hall and indulge in the luxury of a shave."

He put on the new white hat, drew on his gloves, gave the new cane a gentle twirl in the air and went out. He strolled leisurely up to the Hall, and, entering the barber shop, placed himself in the hands of Charlie.

"My sable friend, I would like you to take off all the superfluous hirsute appendages you can, leaving me only a modest moustache, and a fair allowance of hair."

"You want to be shaved?" inquired Charlie.

"That is my humble wish, my most noble knight of the lather and razor."

Charlie went to work industriously with a pair of scissors, and in a few seconds Mr. Brydon's ample whiskers and beard lay in a little heap on the floor.

"Do you want a close shave, sir?"

"Take off everything but the skin. Leave that, if possible, uncut."

"Yah, yah! You bet I don't take none of that off."

Mr. Brydon's shaving, hair cutting and hair dressing being completed, he had his hair and moustache dyed a glossy black, and arose from the chair a new man, scarcely recognizable as the seedy, unkempt individual of the morning. He surveyed himself with great satisfaction in the glass and muttered, "That will do. I think it would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to identify Richard Cranston, of Richmond celebrity in the past, with Robert Brydon of the present. I have wanted to make this change for some time, but waited until I could make it complete; now it is complete, and Brydon is himself again."

He walked jauntily out of the barber shop, stepped into the bar-room, took a drink and a cigar, and then went for a pleasant stroll. It was quite dark when he got tired of walking about, and, being reminded by certain inward cravings that his lunch had been light, he proceeded towards the Terrapin, determined that his dinner should be heavy, and that he would drink to his own good health in a pint of champagne.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was more difficult for Arthur Austin to keep his self-imposed appointment at the Central Station than he had supposed. With true womanly instinct Jessie knew that something very serious had happened to annoy him ; and, although she forbore questioning him, she fluttered around him all the evening, giving him now a gentle caress, now a fond look, now a bright smile. She sang for him, and tried all a woman's loving wiles to cheer him and win him from the gloom which seemed to weigh him down. But it was in vain. The more Jessie caressed him, the greater the weight grew at his heart ; and, although he tried hard, the gloom would deepen on his brow as he thought how soon he may be debarred from enjoying those caresses. At last he rose to leave the room, and said he was going for a short walk, but would be back in half an hour.

"Let me go with you," said Jessie. "I have been indoors nearly all day and a walk will do me good."

"No, darling. I am going to meet a gentleman on business and it would not do for you to go with me. To-morrow night we will take a nice long walk together."

Jessie pouted the least bit, and a tear sprang to her eye; it was the first request Arthur had ever refused her ; and she, spoiled child as she was, felt it more keenly than others would a more serious matter.

"Don't fret, pet," said Arthur, kissing her ; "I won't be long, and Frank will keep you company until I return."

"I shall wait up for you, Arthur, so come back as soon as you can."

"Wait up for me ! Why, I shall be back before ten."

"Are you quite sure ?"

"Quite."

It was a little after nine when Arthur Austin reached the Central Station. In answer to his inquiry for Cullen he was directed to the detective's room up-stairs, where he found the detective in conversation with an eccentric-looking individual who, he afterwards discovered, was a newspaper reporter. Cullen was evidently giving him an "item," and the reporter seemed greatly pleased thereat, for he laughed heartily as he made notes in his memorandum book of what Cullen was telling him.

Arthur stood in the background and quietly watched the detective. Somehow he gained comfort from looking at him. The face was that of a thoughtful, intelligent, honest man. Mild,

quiet eyes, with a slightly meditative look in them ; a strong fine-cut mouth, giving indication of strength of purpose and determination ; a well-knit frame, of good size and proportion ; large hands with strong wrists, giving indications of great physical strength : altogether he was a man to prepossess you at first sight—a man you instinctively felt it would be safe to trust a secret with, and who would do his work quietly and unobtrusively, but do it well. He was smoking an ancient meerschaum pipe in quite an enjoyable sort of way.

There is quite an art in smoking a pipe. Do not think that smoking consists simply in putting the end of a pipe in your mouth, violently inhaling a quantity of smoke and then as rapidly exhaling it again. That is not enjoying a smoke. That is only burning tobacco. I like to see a man smoke calmly, slowly and deliberately ; to draw in the smoke quietly and easily and hold it in his mouth a moment as if he enjoyed the taste of it. I like to see him emit the smoke carefully, a little at a time, in curling little puffs, and let it twine about his face as he inhales the rich aroma of the weed. A man who smokes in this way has not, as a general thing, "a sweet-smelling savor" to the non-smoker, but he thoroughly and entirely enjoys a smoke as nobody else does. His pipe is to him a friend and companion, tobacco smoke a sort of ether in which his fancy roams at will, and pictures beautiful and fantastic shapes in the clouds of eddying vapor as they rise.

Cullen smoked a pipe in a comfortable sort of way, and Arthur Austin, who was a great smoker, felt his confidence increase in the man who knew how to smoke a pipe well. In a corresponding degree his opinion of the reporter fell as he noticed that he sat with his knees doubled up, the heels of his boots caught in the rung of the chair, and puffed away in short quick jerks, like the action of a steam tug, at a dirty-looking briar pipe ; so short and quick were the puffs that it did not need a great stretch of the imagination to fancy that he heard the panting of the engine.

Cullen rose as soon as Arthur entered, and advancing to him said, with just "the least bit of a brogue," which made his voice sound even fuller and sweeter than it naturally was,

"What can I do for you, sir?"

"I want to see Detective Cullen. I suppose I am addressing him."

"You are. Take a seat, sir, I will be disengaged in one minute."

Then turning to the reporter, he continued, "I got a cab at the

depot and brought him up to the Central Station, and he will appear before Mr. Brehaut to-morrow morning."

"All right," said the reporter, making a few mild-looking hieroglyphics which passed current with him for notes. "Anything else to-night?"

"Only one little case of a girl stealing some clothes. Lafon can tell you about it, I do not know the particulars, or, perhaps, the sergeant in charge can tell you. Now, sir," he continued, turning to Arthur as the reporter left the room, still puffing away vigorously at the dirty-looking pipe, "what can I do for you?"

"Sit down, Sergeant, I wish to have a long talk with you if you please. Don't put your pipe aside, I like smoke, and perhaps you will allow me to light a cigar. Can I offer you one?"

"No, thank you, sir: I prefer a pipe."

Cullen filled and lighted his pipe, and Arthur lit his cigar, and both men took a few whiffs in silence; then Arthur said:

"What I wish to consult you about is a very delicate and private matter, and requires great care and caution. I need scarcely tell you that the utmost secrecy is expected."

"Quite unnecessary, sir; all our affairs are secret. If we were even to begin to talk, our work would be done, and we would never find out anything."

"Good. Now I want to know if you could go to the States for a week or ten days, to prosecute some private business for me? Of course you shall be handsomely rewarded."

"I might be able to go, but I should have to get orders from the Chief. I could not go without his order."

"Then it will be necessary for the Chief to know the errand you go on?"

"Certainly."

Another to be taken into his confidence; another aware of his guilt, if he was guilty; another who would hold in his hands the power to dash the cup of happiness from his lips. The thought was a bitter one to Arthur, but there was no alternative; he must find out the truth or falsehood of Brydon's assertions, and there was no way so sure, so silent and so speedy as this. He paused for a moment and then said:

"A friend of mine has suddenly and unexpectedly found himself in a very curious position; in fact he has every reason to fear that he has, unintentionally, committed a great crime."

"Murder?"

"No; not quite so bad as that, but bad enough—bigamy."

"Phew," whistled Cullen in a sympathetic sort of way, "I never could find what some people want with so many wives; one gives trouble enough as a general thing, but two or three always make mischief. What are the circumstances, sir?"

Arthur narrated the circumstances of his first and second marriage, just as I have already told them, only he concealed names. He explained Brydon's plot, and said that he thought the woman was in New York, where he wanted inquiries first made to ascertain whether she really was alive; he also wanted inquiries made in Savannah where her death was reported to have occurred. When he had finished, Cullen paused for a few moments, thinking over the case; he then said, "I don't see anything difficult about the case; if she is alive, I can easily find her; she is an actress and I can get her address from the *Clipper* or from one of the Dramatic Agencies, I should think. She goes, I suppose, by the name she bore before her marriage?"

"I do not know. When she returned to the stage after her separation from her husband she resumed her maiden name, but if she was cunning enough to sham death she would be cunning enough to change her name."

"Most likely. What was her maiden name?"

"Effie Barron."

"What was the name of the gentleman she married?"

"Arthur Austin."

Cullen carefully noted the two names down in his pocket-book, and then asked for a general description of her appearance, age, etc. This was given with great exactness and minuteness by Arthur Austin, indeed so minute that, when he mentioned a mole on the left shoulder which was quite hidden except when she wore a very low dress, and a small bright red mark behind her right ear, Cullen looked up very sharply at him as if he had just conceived an idea.

"I have her photograph, taken some five years ago, if that will be of any use to you," said Arthur, in conclusion.

"It might be, at all events it won't do any harm to let me see it."

"I will bring it with me to-morrow morning when I come down to see the Chief. I am much obliged to you, and, if you can bring me information of that woman's death, I will give you one hundred dollars."

"I can't bring you the information unless she is dead, but I think I can find out the truth of the matter at all events."

"Get me the truth, and you shall have the reward all the same; of course, I pay all your expenses. When will you be ready to start?"

"By to-morrow afternoon's train, if the Chief will let me go."

"Very well, good night."

"Wait one moment, sir, please, you did not give me your name and address."

"Is that necessary?"

"Certainly, we must know who we are working for, or we don't know how to proceed."

Arthur paused for a moment, and then handed Cullen one of his business cards.

"I thought so," said Cullen as soon as he had read the name and address. "I thought from the start that this was your own case, Mr. Austin, but it makes no difference, sir, you might have trusted me at first. I know your uncle, Mr. Lubbuck, well; he's a fine old gentleman, and I shall do my best to find out all I can for you. "Good night, sir!"

"Good night!"

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It was only half-past nine when Arthur left the police station and he sauntered leisurely up Notre Dame street. His interview with Cullen had excited him considerably, and again the tempter whispered in his ear that he needed some stimulants to strengthen his nerves. When he got opposite the Terrapin he paused for a few seconds, and finally, deciding in favor of the devil, went in and ordered a glass of brandy and water. After he had drank it, it occurred to him that he had eaten no lunch and very little dinner, and that he felt rather hungry; he, therefore, ordered some oysters and went into the inner room to wait for them being cooked.

"Ah, dear boy, (hic) glad to see you," said the voice of Mr. Robert Brydon as he entered, and turning he saw that worthy, evidently a little the worse of liquor, sitting at one of the tables, eating nuts and raisins and drinking champagne. The change in the man's appearance surprised him, but it made him look more like the Robert Brydon he had known in other days and under other circumstances. His first impulse was to pass on and take the most distant table he could find, or leave the room altogether; but, on second thought, fatal second thought! he fancied that he

would pretend to be very friendly with Brydon, and so disarm any suspicion he might have that any investigation was being made; besides, he thought, in his present condition, Brydon might be talkative and perhaps drop some information which would be of service to him; he, therefore, patted Brydon on the shoulder and said familiarly,

“Why, Bob, old boy, you are completely metamorphosed; allow me to congratulate you on your improved personal appearance, you look something like your old self.”

“Don’t flatter, dear boy, you will make me blush. Sit down, and try some of this ‘Moet and Chandon.’ Capital, upon my word, and you know I used to be considered quite a good judge.”

Arthur took a chair and the proffered glass, and these two men who had once been friends, and who now hated each other with a deep and bitter hatred, drank each other’s “good health” with seeming cordiality. This is the democracy of drink. Arthur set himself to work to get Brydon drunk so as to make him even more talkative than usual, but, like many another man who has started out with the intention of making a friend drunk, he unfortunately took too much and got drunk himself. They sat drinking and talking until midnight, when they adjourned to another tavern and kept up the carouse until nearly two o’clock, when the proprietor sent for a cab and ordered them to be taken home.

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Jessie sat silently thinking for a long time after Arthur had left her; Arthur’s curious behavior, and the fact that he had been drinking, worried her greatly. Her young life had been so free from care, so much one unbroken chain of joys linked together by loving hands, that the least thing fell with blighting force on her sensitive nature, and she already fancied that she saw the shadow of some great sorrow looming up in the distance. She pondered and pondered, but could find no solution for Arthur’s anxious, abstracted manner, and Frank found her in a brown study, in the parlor where Arthur had left her, still thinking, thinking, what could be the pressing business which had called Arthur away from her side for the first time since they had been married.

“Did Arthur go out?” said Miss Frank, “I thought I heard him in the hall.”

“Yes, he is gone, and oh! Frank, I am so anxious, there’s some horrid business Arthur is keeping from me, and I feel miserable.”

"Pooh, pooh; you haven't got over your honeymoon yet, and, of course, you expect Arthur to be tied to your apron strings. Women always make that mistake when they are first married; they think the man marries them, on the contrary they marry the man, and that makes the difference. Arthur won't run away, Jessie, don't be afraid of that. Come and play something for me."

"I can't play, Frank, didn't you notice how strange Arthur appeared to-night?"

"Yes, he seemed to me to be troubled with bile, and I shall recommend him to take a blue pill in the morning. Come, play something for me."

Jessie obliged her sister for half an hour or so, and then began to weary of playing, and finally went off to her room about ten o'clock and waited for Arthur's return. Miss Frank waited in the parlor for half an hour, picked out a few airs on the piano, sang "Champagne Charlie" for her own edification, and finally decided to go to bed and read her brother-in-law a small lecture in the morning. By eleven o'clock the house was perfectly quiet, and there was only one anxious, loving heart, waiting in breathless expectancy, and listening with fervent earnestness to every sound, longing, fearing, hoping for the coming of the one it loved. Eleven—twelve—one—two o'clock struck and still Jessie sat at the window, anxiously waiting for Arthur's return; all sorts of fancies flitted across her brain, the most fearful disasters which might possibly have befallen her darling appeared as possible as the most ordinary every-day occurrence. At last she heard the sound of approaching wheels, and a cab stopped before the house; the cabman descended, and with great difficulty assisted a limp and helpless figure to the ground and managed to guide it as far as the door. The moment Jessie saw that figure she recognized it, and she ran down stairs at once, and opened the door before the cabman could ring the bell. The cabman assisted the figure—it could scarcely be called a man—to the staircase and then left it clinging blindly to the bannister. The door was closed, the cabman had departed, when poor Jessie, almost broken-hearted, approached the swaying, uncertain figure, and, clasping it tenderly but firmly around the waist, said :

"Arthur, darling, come to bed."

Slowly and with great difficulty the helpless figure was assisted up-stairs by the frail girl, and when their room was reached the figure sank heavily on the bed and in a few seconds was in a fast,

deep sleep. His gentle, loving wife—the girl of but yesterday—hung over him with tender care, loosened his collar, opened his shirt, with almost superhuman effort placed him easily and comfortably in bed, and then sank on her knees by the bedside and prayed long and earnestly. Poor Jessie! the great grief of her life had come; the sorrow which she had, almost unconsciously, dreaded all night had fallen on her; the man she loved and honoured with fervent, passionate adoration, lay before her an inanimate mass of humanity, sodden and stupefied from the effects of drink; the idol of her adoration was abased, and she cried in bitterness of spirit at the great sorrow which had fallen upon her.

## CHAPTER VI.

### OUT OF THE THEATRE.

MR. ROBERT BRYDON did not return to his boarding-house after he parted with Arthur, but went to the St. Lawrence Hall and took a room for the night, or rather morning. He was very drunk, but not nearly as bad as Arthur, and he awoke about ten o'clock the next morning, with just a slight headache, and feeling as he expressed it "rather seedy." He was too old a campaigner to care much for that, so he took a good cold bath, ordered a "John Collins," imbibed it with evident relish, and started for a long walk. He walked his headache off, then had breakfast, and afterwards called at the office of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co., to see if Arthur had come down. The clerk in charge told him that Arthur had not been at the office that morning, and, while they were talking together, Jessie and Frank came in to say that Arthur was not very well, and would not be at the office all day. Jessie looked very pale and worn, and her eyes showed signs of recent tears. Mr. Brydon politely raised his hat, and Frank elevated her aspiring nose, and quietly looked him down. Mr. Brydon had a very fair share of assurance, but the calm, quiet, unflinching stare of Frank's clear grey eyes took all his impudence out of him, and he actually tried as hard as he knew how to blush, as he put his hat on again and turned away. The girls did not stay long, and, as soon as they were gone, Mr. Brydon addressed himself to the clerk again, saying carelessly,

"Mrs. Austin, I presume ?"

"Yes."

"And the lady with her ?"

"Her sister, Miss Frank."

"Ah ! thanks. Please tell Mr. Austin that Mr. Brydon will call on him at eleven to-morrow morning. Good day."

"Her sister, Miss Frank," soliloquized Mr. Brydon—"that reduces matters a little—two into two hundred thousand goes one hundred thousand times. Very neat, very neat, indeed ; and worth looking after. Miss Frank is a fine-looking girl, too, plenty of bone and lots of muscle, not much beauty to

boast of, but a good, healthy-looking girl, and I don't care much about beauty. I must make Austin introduce me; the spec would not be a bad one, and I mean to go in for it. I must think of other matters though. I must not neglect business, and my business, at present, lies in the epistolatory line."

He strolled back towards the Hall, and on the way stopped at a stationer's, and bought a packet of envelopes and a quire of note paper. He then went into the reading-room at the Hall and addressed himself to his task. The letter seemed to be a very particular one, for he thrice tore it up and re-wrote it; at last he seemed satisfied with his efforts; he read the letter over carefully, sealed and directed it, and then went over to the Post Office and mailed it for the states.

\* \* \* \* \*

Arthur Austin passed a miserable day. Jessie uttered no word of complaint, but her pale face and sad expression reproached him more than any words of hers could have done. He fully realized how foolish and cruel he had been, and firmly determined that he would never yield to temptation again. He attempted no explanation with Jessie, but was even more tender and loving to her all day than usual, as if to offer some sort of mute apology for the pain and sorrow he had caused her the previous night. He went to business the following morning, not feeling very well yet, but sufficiently recovered to attend to his duties. Punctual to his appointment arrived Mr. Brydon, looking as fresh and bright and as scrupulously clean and polished as usual.

"Ah, dear boy, charmed to see you again. Quite recovered, I hope, from the effects of Wednesday night?"

"Nearly so, but not quite. Come into the private office, I want to speak to you."

They entered the private office, and Arthur carefully closed the door. He stood by the table for a few seconds, watching his companion, who had seated himself in the large easy chair and was quietly surveying the room, and then said:

"Brydon, we must come to terms."

"Exactly, dear boy, nothing will suit me better."

"I have told you I have very little means of my own. I can make you a small allowance, and I am willing to do it if you will keep my secret until I can find some means to get out of the terrible difficulty I am in. My present salary is eighteen hundred dollars a year. I am willing to allow you fifteen dollars a week,

which is as much as I can afford, and is more than you could work for in Montreal."

"Very liberal, dear boy, very liberal ; but I really don't like to accept. You see I asked you to provide for me, but I don't exactly like the idea of being pensioned off. I like to make a show of doing something, even if I don't do it; but, pon my word, I feel such a desire for hard work coming over me that I really think I should do something if I had the chance."

"I know of no place that would suit you."

"I do."

"Where ?"

"Here, Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. want a book-keeper, behold an excellent one who wants the place ; double or single entry, sterling or currency, it's all the same to me. You know, dear boy, that I am competent, and, if the duties are too arduous, you can help me. As for salary, give me what you yourself received before the late happy little event, and if it does not suffice for my modest bachelor wants, I can borrow from you what I may require. Consider the thing done, dear boy, consider it done."

"I do not like the idea." said Arthur. "I scarcely have the right to employ any additional help during Mr. Lubbuck's absence, especially in the dull season, when I can easily do all the work. Besides, to tell the truth, Brydon, if I have got to buy your silence, as I suppose I must, I don't care to see any more of you than I cannot avoid."

"That's unkind, dear boy ; don't let your mind be prejudiced against me. I want to do the square thing ; you're up, I'm down ; you've got a rich wife, I haven't a red cent to bless myself with ; you've got a secret, I know it ; let us pull together. Two heads are better than one, and perhaps together we may find a way of disposing of Mrs. Austin No. 1. Better let me be your friend, dear boy, as I have been since boyhood ; think it over well before you decide. I have a special reason for becoming connected, even in an humble way, with the eminent house of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co., and I hope you will not thwart my whim. It gives a man an air of respectability, you know, to be attached to a great house, and I sadly need a little respectability in Montreal."

Arthur sat for a minute or two, thinking. He did not wish to have Brydon in the office with him, but then it may only be for a short time. Cullen must be back in two or three weeks at the latest, and he would then know the truth or falsehood of

Brydon's story; if it was false he would simply have to dismiss him; if it was true, he felt sure he could hit on some way by which he could make sufficient of a case against Miss Effie Barron to obtain a divorce from her, and then he would marry Jessie over again.

He thought it would be better to have Brydon under his eye, even to be friendly with him, as he may, perhaps, gain from him Effie's present address, or the name under which she acted. He had the power, if he pleased to exercise it, of employing or discharging anyone in the office during Mr. Lubbuck's absence, and so, after a slight pause, he said: "Brydon, I agree with you, it is better that we should be friends. You can take the position of book-keeper in the firm as soon as you please."

"To-morrow morning, dear boy, to-morrow morning."

"Very well; your salary will be eight hundred dollars. I shall expect you, of course, to keep the regular office hours—nine to five—and to make a show of doing your work, even if you are not competent to do it."

"Not competent, dear boy, not competent! I can keep a set of books backwards. Not competent, indeed; it must be a queer set of books Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. keep if I am not competent to keep them."

"Very well then, old fellow, you shall keep them. Everything else satisfactory?"

"Everything, except one trifling matter, which is scarcely worth mentioning. I should like to be introduced to your charming little wife, and her particularly masculine looking sister. Nothing like cultivating the domestic virtues, dear boy, and you know I always was fond of ladies' society."

"I see no advantage to be gained from your having an acquaintance with my wife."

"But I see considerable advantage to be gained from an acquaintance with her charming sister."

"What! have you designs on Frank? Why, Brydon, you are the most extraordinary chap I ever met. So you want an opportunity to win Miss Frank and her hundred thousand dollars; well, I don't think there is the least chance for you, but you may try."

"Thanks, dear boy; as to the chance I am somewhat egotistical, and think that when a kindred soul like her's becomes acquainted

with a kindred soul like mine, it will be a case of 'veni, vidi, vici,' as we say in the classics."

" Which in your case will mean, I came, I saw, I got kicked out."

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Leave for Cullen to go to New York was easily obtained from the Chief, and the detective accordingly started on his voyage of investigation. He was away for three weeks, during which time he did not write, and Arthur became very anxious to know something of his success. At last one morning he walked into the office very quietly and gave his report. He had been successful and unsuccessful ; he had established beyond a doubt that Miss Effie Barron did not die at Savannah at the time her death was reported to have taken place. He had visited Savannah and discovered that there were no such persons as the doctor and undertaker from whom Arthur had received letters ; he had made inquiries and found that Miss Barron had been ill—or had pretended to be—but had recovered and left Savannah, it was thought for Charleston, he had gone to Charleston but could find no trace of her. He next tried New York ; the Dramatic Agencies knew nothing of her ; she had never been of much importance in the profession, and very little importance was paid to where she might be. One agent thought she was dead, another that she was married and had left the stage. He had inquired at the St. Charles hotel, where Brydon said he had seen her, but no one knew her by name, or recognised her photograph or description ; the proprietor said the photograph resembled a Mrs. Cranston who had boarded at the hotel some two or three months previously, but it could not be her, as her husband was with her, and she was much stouter than the photograph appeared to be. Application to the police evolved nothing, and a pathetic advertisement in the *Herald*, inviting Effie Barron to communicate with "an old admirer and hear of something to her advantage," brought forth no response. Cullen was, therefore, obliged to return very little wiser than he went, except that he had established the truth of Brydon's assertion that Effie Barron had not died at Savannah at the time Arthur Austin supposed she had.

This news was not very satisfactory to Arthur, but he was compelled to be content with it ; Cullen had evidently done all in his power, and he must now trust to finding out something from Brydon. That gentleman developed a new quality—he got fond of

work ; he actually set himself zealously to work, keeping the books and accounts of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co., and, being a good accountant, he soon got them well in hand and managed to make himself tolerably well acquainted with the position, financial standing, resources, etc., of the house. He found out that a large amount of money was kept in the Banks during the winter season, when trade was almost at a stand-still, and that a still larger sum was temporarily invested in stocks and other easily convertible securities. He found, without much trouble, that the amount so invested reached the sum of something like seventy-five thousand dollars, and he used frequently to lie awake at nights, thinking about these "available funds," as he used to call them. He was steady and attentive to business, and really assisted Arthur a good deal. They got on very well together. Arthur trying to disarm any suspicion Brydon might have of him, and Brydon endeavouring to dispel any feelings of resentment which Arthur might have against him on account of the rascally trick which had been played on him. The constant strain on Arthur's nerves, the incessant dread of discovery, the fear of Brydon's treachery at any moment, and the uncertainty of his position operated on him terribly. Never accustomed to exert much self-control, and not naturally possessed of a very strong will, he lately gave way to temptation again, and sought from the use of stimulants to fortify his courage or deaden his sensibilities to the danger of his position. Many and many a night Jessie would wait up for him and, although he seldom came home in as beastly condition as he was on the first night he met Brydon, still he never came home sober. He became slovenly and untidy in his dress, let his beard grow, and took no pains with himself. In his carouses Mr. Brydon was his constant companion, but what was poison to Arthur Austin seemed meat to him, and except an occasional headache and, once in a while, a little flush in the face, or eyes a trifle blood-shot, he showed no signs of his dissipation, and did his work as well as if he had kept perfectly sober. To be sure he did not drink nearly as hard as Arthur, who drank with the reckless avidity of a man who wants to drink himself drunk, but still he drank a great deal, and nothing but the excellency of his constitution could have borne it so well. Nothing more was said by him about being introduced to Jessie and Frank, and Arthur thought he had given up the idea, when one evening, about a week after Cullen's return, the sisters called at the office for Arthur, and went into the private office with him.

They had not been in there more than two or three minutes when Mr. Brydon wrote on a slip of paper "introduce me," and entering the private office, under a pretence of getting a letter signed for the mail, handed it to Arthur, who, after a moment's hesitation, complied, and introduced Mr. Robert Brydon to his wife and sister-in-law. Mr. Brydon did not stay long in the room ; he exchanged a few commonplace remarks with Frank, paid Jessie a little compliment about how pleased he was to see his old friend so happily married, excused himself on the plea of business, and bowed himself out. He had accomplished what he wanted, the ice was broken, and he could cultivate the acquaintance at his leisure. He could be very pleasant and affable if he pleased, and his easy, rattling style had made him quite a favorite amongst the ladies at one time of his life, and he had no doubt he had enough of the old fascination left to interest Miss Frank. To be sure that independent young lady had not seemed much impressed at first sight, and had slightly elevated her nose—she had a trick of doing it when anything did not please her—but Mr. Brydon did not take that very seriously to heart—his self-conceit being more than sufficient to make him believe that he could easily overcome any little prejudice about "first impressions."

"I did not know you had a new clerk, Arthur," said Jessie, when Brydon left the room ; "he seems very gentlemanly, too," she added, as the memory of the compliment Brydon had paid her recurred to her. Jessie had only been married a short while, and any compliment about her marriage still made her blush and feel very happy.

"He's a snob," said blunt Frank, "and I don't like him."

"Oh ! Frank, I am sure he seemed very polite and quite a gentleman. Who is he, Arthur ?"

"I told you his name, darling, Robert Brydon. For the rest he was a schoolmate of mine and is an old friend."

"There, Frank," said Jessie, triumphantly, "he is an old friend of Arthur's. How could you call him a snob ?"

"Because Arthur isn't a snob it doesn't prove that all his schoolfellows or acquaintances are not," said the persistent Frank. "Mr. Brydon may be a very nice gentleman, but I should never accuse him of it, judging from present appearances. But never mind him ; come, Arthur, let us go home ; dinner will be waiting."

Three months slipped quietly away, and brought nothing very momentous with them. Mr. Brydon showed Arthur a letter dated and postmarked "Paterson, N. J., " which was evidently written by Effie Barron and addressed to Mr. Brydon, New Orleans, that ingenious gentleman having contrived, through the medium of a friend, to write a letter from New Orleans, and receive an answer there while he quietly remained in Montreal. The letter was a mixture of bad grammar, bad spelling and bad temper; it was written in answer to one from Brydon informing Effie that he had traced Arthur to New Orleans only to find that he had accepted a five years' engagement in the Figi Islands, and that he had left for his new home about a month before he, Brydon, had reached the Crescent city.

Miss Effie wrote in a very bad humor, abused her "scamp of a husband," as she called Arthur, very liberally, and concluded with a threat which he sincerely hoped she would carry out, namely, that she intended to apply for a divorce on the ground of desertion and infidelity. This letter reassured Arthur a little, and made him feel somewhat more at ease, but still he could not overcome entirely his uneasiness with regard to Brydon, and the fear was ever before him that that gentleman was only playing with him as a cat does with a mouse, in order to prolong his torture and make his ruin more complete. Then the anomalous position in which Jessie was placed was a constant misery to him; a wife in the eyes of the world, and about to become a mother and yet not married to him. Again and again he tried to tell her, and again and again his courage failed him. Then he thought of writing to Mr. Lubbuck, explaining all and asking him to return or to get Mr. Lownds to come to Montreal to take charge of the business, and allow him, Arthur, to take Jessie to England, where he thought he could leave her with less scandal than he could do here. But he never wrote the letter; when it came to the point of doing so he always put it off and allowed himself to drift on, trusting to chance to shield him from discovery and disgrace before Mr. Lubbuck's return.

During those three months Mr. Brydon had been propriety itself. Wonderful to relate, he had not exceeded his salary, had "borrowed" nothing from Arthur, and had attended closely to business. He lived quietly and indulged in no excesses—at least none that were known—except his periodical sprees with Arthur, and altogether behaved himself exceedingly well. His sprees grew

less frequent, and he even attempted to dissuade Arthur from his habits of intemperance, which had grown terribly strong on him, and really did influence him a little ; but the habit had become too strong, and nothing but the greatest effort of self-control could stop it now. Mr. Brydon had become a regular and frequent visitor at Mr. Lubbuck's, and, singular to relate, appeared to have made a favorable impression on Miss Frank. She did not call him a snob any more, but confessed that, although he was not very refined, he was exceedingly polite and highly entertaining and amusing. He was full of anecdotes and stories, had read a good deal of the light literature of the day, and was rather an agreeable companion. He sympathized deeply with Frank in her medical studies, and actually studied medicine a little, on the sly, to be able to converse with her. He escorted her to church every Sunday evening, and sang the hymns in a very loud voice, very much out of tune. To be sure, he used to go to a well known French restaurant afterward and indulge in a game of euchre with any one who was not aware of his extraordinary luck in holding bowers and aces, and drink a good deal of brandy and water "to wash the taste out of his mouth," as he called it ; but nobody but himself knew of that, and he passed as a very quiet, respectable, steady young man.

Miss Frank had not assumed her liking for Brydon at first ; in fact, she quietly snubbed and ignored him for about a month, but gradually she had changed her manner towards him, and now treated him politely, and, indeed, sometimes very kindly, as if he was an old friend. Mr. Brydon ascribed this change to his own personal powers and agreeable manner, and would have been greatly chagrined had he known the real cause of her altered demeanor towards him. That penetrative young lady had very quickly discovered that there was some private understanding between that talkative young man and her brother-in-law. She noticed that Brydon exercised some sort of authority over Arthur. She knew it was not that authorized by old friendship, for she was convinced Arthur did not really like Brydon, and would have kicked that insinuating young gentleman out of the house had he dared to do so. What, then, was the secret that bound them together ? That there was a secret of some kind Miss Frank was certain, and as she had a natural antipathy to mysteries, she resolved to ferret this one out. She noticed that Arthur's habit of intemperance had commenced only after his acquaintance with

Brydon, and also that his whole nature seemed to have changed since his intercourse with that worthy. Frank had not more than the average curiosity of women, but she felt there was something wrong about the secret between Arthur and Brydon ; she mistrusted that glib individual, and determined to set her woman's wit to work against him, and in favor of her brother-in-law whom she really liked and sincerely respected. This was the secret of Miss Frank's changed manner towards Mr. Brydon, but that gentleman being totally unconscious of it prided himself on an easy conquest, and already felt that the hundred thousand dollars was secured to him.

Matters went on smoothly for three months, when Mr. Brydon, led away by his self-conceit, made trouble for himself by formally proposing for her hand and hundred thousand dollars.

Frank was thoroughly astonished, and Mr. Brydon had kissed her hand and attempted to press her to his breast before she had recovered her presence of mind enough to snatch her hand away and tell him not to make a fool of himself.

"Mr. Brydon," she said, "you have perfectly astonished me. What could ever have put into your head a notion that I ever cared for you ? I have treated you as Arthur's friend, but nothing more, and any other construction you may have put upon my conduct has been the result of your own self-conceit. I trust you will never recur to this subject again." She bowed haughtily, and left the room.

Mr. Brydon in his turn was thoroughly astonished. He had expected an easy victory, and had suffered instead an ignominious defeat. He saw all his brilliant project of getting one hundred thousand dollars vanish in a moment, and his disappointment was very bitter. He appealed to Arthur to interfere, but this Arthur peremptorily declined to do.

"I told you you would have no chance with Frank," he said. "You have tried and failed, and I do not intend to interfere. Besides, Frank is her own mistress, and what I could say would probably have very little weight with her. You must manage your own affairs without any assistance from me."

"Very well, my dear boy, I will try, and perhaps I shall succeed."

Although Mr. Brydon tried to speak lightly, he felt his disappointment keenly. He had taken quite a little fancy to Frank and quite a large fancy to her prospective hundred thousand

dollars. In fact, the possession of that had become quite a morbid fancy with him ; and he felt as if he had actually been defrauded by Frank out of what properly belonged to him. He was not a man, however, to be defeated by one rebuff, and he set himself to work to find out a way to recover what he considered his lost fortune, and, to a man of such great resources for evil as he was, it did not take long for him to devise a plan which he thought would answer his purpose. His plan took an epistolatory form, and again he addressed himself to his correspondent in the States. A few days after he made his first application to Arthur for money : he said he wanted two hundred and fifty dollars for a few days, when he would return it. Arthur gave him the money, but had no idea it would ever be returned.

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It was now the early part of March, and the theatre had been closed for several months, when suddenly every dead wall in the city was covered with flaming placards announcing in glaring letters of immense size that Mdlle. Seraphine, the great pantomimic and burlesque actress would give six performances, commencing on the following Monday in the great sensation drama of the "French Spy." Arthur was a great admirer of the drama, and although he did not like plays of the French Spy order, as a general thing, still it was so long since he had any opportunity of attending the theatre that he determined to go. He therefore engaged a box for the opening night, and asked Jessie and Frank to accompany him. On the evening of the performance, however, Miss Frank excused herself on the plea of a headache and remained at home, and Jessie and Arthur went to the theatre together. The house was crowded in every part, and the piece proceeded smoothly until near the middle of the first act when Mdlle. Seraphine made her *entrée* as Henri St. Almi, a French soldier. She was a fine looking woman, coarse, but of great physical development, and her handsome tight-fitting uniform displayed her ample figure to great advantage. She came on with the easy self-possession of an actress who feels assured that she will be well received by her audience, and she was not disappointed ; ringing plaudits greeted her from every part of the audience, and she paused near the centre of the stage and, raising her cap, bowed low in acknowledgment of the compliment. As the applause subsided she raised her head and looked with a steady unflinching gaze into the private box where Arthur and Jessie sat. One look

at her sent every drop of blood in Arthur's body chilling back to his heart ; he sat like one suddenly turned to stone, gazing with a fixed rigid look and blanched terror-stricken countenance as one suddenly spell-bound, and unable to remove his eyes from the young French soldier.

Husband and wife looked into each other's faces.

Mdlle. Seraphine paused only for a second, and then with a scornful, bitter smile she barely touched the brim of her cap, bowing very slightly, and turning to the actors went on with the piece. No one had noticed the acting of this small drama, "not set down in the bills," and all were now too intent on the business of the scene to pay any attention to the pallid, horror-stricken face in the private box, watching with glaring, wild-looking eyes every movement of the voluptuous figure on whom the attention of all were now centered. Even Jessie did not notice the strange glance exchanged by the actress and Arthur, and it was not for some time that she turned to him to make some remark about the play, and noticed his deadly paleness.

"Arthur, darling, what is the matter, are you ill ?" she said, laying her hand on his arm. He started as she spoke, and shrank from her touch as if it stung him.

"No, no," he said in a hoarse, pained voice, "I am not very well, I want some fresh air ; I will be back directly." He rose hastily and moved towards the door of the box.

"Let us go home, darling, if you are not well ; I don't care to stay."

"No, no, you remain here, I will be back presently." He staggered out like a drunken man, and had to support himself by the backs of the seats as he passed out to the entrance door.

He did not return until the second act was nearly completed, and Jessie saw with pain, by his flushed face and unsteady manner, that he had been drinking heavily. He took his seat without a word, and sat sullenly looking at the stage. Mdlle. Seraphine noted his return, and a strange hard bitter smile hovered for a moment about her lips and then passed away. She was just coming to one of her most effective "points," and she appeared nervling herself for a great effort.

It may be remembered by some of my readers that one of the most dramatic situations in the French spy occurs in the second act when the heroine, disguised as the Arab boy Hamet, shoots a burning arrow over the walls of Algiers to the French forces with-

out. All actresses take great pains with this part of the business and execute it carefully; and Mdlle. Seraphine acted the pantomime with more spirit than she had hitherto displayed. She affixed the paper on the arrow, lighted it at the old sergeant's torch, as is always done, and then advancing to the footlights fitted the arrow to the string, knelt for a moment on one knee as if silently engaged in prayer, and reverently kissed the haft of the arrow. But instead of rising, going to the back of the stage and shooting the arrow off, as all actresses do, she simply turned on one side facing the box Arthur was in, and, with a look of deadly hatred on her face, raised her bow, and aimed the point of the arrow directly at Arthur's head.

"Bravo! Bravo!" shouted Mr. Brydon from a front seat in the pit, bringing his hands together with a mighty clap like a young cannon: "never saw anything finer, splendid! splendid!"

Mdlle. Seraphine started at the sudden noise, her hands trembled, and the arrow, unconsciously released, buried itself harmlessly in the wainscoting of the proscenium. She stifled a half uttered curse, and turned angrily up the stage. In a moment however, she recovered her self-possession and drawing the arrow from its position she continued the business of the piece, apparently suffering only from the interference of Mr. Brydon. That gentleman did not find his position a comfortable one, the audience evidently looked on him as an evil-disposed person, who had maliciously spoiled a very fine situation and there were many friendly suggestions to "punch his head," "put him out," etc., but Mr. Brydon saved anybody the trouble of putting him out by quietly leaving the theatre and going round to the stage entrance. As he went up the narrow dark alley leading to the dressing-room he thought to himself:

"A near squeak, by Jove! One second more and that she-devil would have driven that arrow through the dear boy's head, and I should have lost my fortune. No, no, Miss Effie, I am very fond of you, and you can have the pleasure of shooting the dear boy if you particularly desire it, but not until I have done with him, and provided the necessary funds for both of us to spend the remainder of our days in virtuous ease and comfort."

He went behind the scenes like one accustomed to the place, and having the right of entree, and waited at the wing until Mdlle. Seraphine had finished her "grand broad-sword combat," and the act was over; he then followed that young lady to her

dressing-room and, carefully closing the door, had a long and earnest conversation with her.

Arthur scarcely noticed the pointing of the arrow at him, in fact he was too drunk to notice anything, and, even if he had, he would have wished that the arrow had sped on its way, and he had been relieved of all his difficulties by death. Jessie, however, noticed the strange action of the actress, and the wonderfully vengeful expression which came over her face at the moment she levelled the arrow, and she was greatly terrified; she thought the actress was mad, and Arthur had in some unknown manner excited her resentment—no suspicion of the truth occurred to her, and her first thought was to get Arthur away before the next act commenced. Arthur, however, refused to go, and they sat while the orchestra was playing, Jessie trying to get Arthur away and he obstinately refusing to go, he could not tell why. There was a long wait, and the orchestra had to fill in another piece; the audience was getting impatient and expressed its displeasure freely; there was considerable excitement behind the scenes, the actors were all ready, the scene all set, but the "star" was still in her dressing room and the prompter could not induce her to come out and continue the piece. A very stormy scene was being enacted in that dressing room between Mdlle. Seraphine and Mr. Brydon, but Mr. Brydon won, and the result of his victory was that before the orchestra had finished the "Overture to Zampa" for the second time Mdlle. Seraphine had written a note and despatched the call-boy to the front with it. The note was addressed to Arthur Austin, and this is what it contained:

"ARTHUR AUSTIN,—Your legal wife wants to see you to-night after the performance, you will find her in room — St. Lawrence Hall. Mind you come, or look out for trouble.

"EFFIE."

The audience was at last appeased, the curtain commenced to rise, and almost at the same time the note was delivered to Arthur; he glanced at it—intuitively guessing its import—and then said hurriedly to Jessie: "Let us go home. I am sick of this trash, I am sure you must be."

Jessie was only too glad to go and get her husband home before he would have an opportunity to drink any more; they thereupon left the box at once, and when Mdlle. Seraphine made her first appearance in the third act she found the box empty. When Arthur reached home he simply opened the door for Jessie to

enter and told her to go in, that he had to meet Brydon on some business and would be back in an hour. She tried hard to get him to remain at home and not go out again at that late hour, but he was obstinate, and slamming the door behind her, went back to his cab and ordered the driver to take him to the St. Lawrence Hall.

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Miss Frank had her own peculiar reason for having a headache and not being able to go to the theatre, and the following note, written by her, might elucidate matters a little :

“ DEAR CHARLIE,—Come and see me about eight, or half-past tonight, *sure*; something special to say to you.

“ FRANK.”

It might be as well to recall to my reader’s memory the fact of the existence of such a person as Mr. Charles Benson, to whom the above note was addressed, and who had quite a sneaking kindness for Miss Frank; but Mr. Benson had been suffering a great deal during the last few months; all the jealousy, ill-will, malice pre-pense, etc., etc.—it wasn’t much with him—had been stirred up by the “scandalous way Frank was carrying on with that fellow Brydon,”—I quote his own words—and he had openly cut Frank, and he was ready at any moment to “punch Mr. Brydon’s nose”—his words again—at the slightest provocation. The receipt of Miss Frank’s note pleased him greatly, but he was wary and careful; he really loved Frank—he had only found that out since Brydon’s appearance on the scene—and he meant to win her if he could, but he did not like to exhibit any signs of haste, and therefore he waited until almost nine o’clock before he replied in person to Frank’s note.

“ You’re a pretty fellow! ” said Miss Frank, as soon as he entered; “ here I have waited half an hour for you, why didn’t you come at the proper time? ”

“ I was afraid I might interrupt a pleasant *tête-à-tête*; ” Mr. Benson said this with what he considered a cuttingly sarcastic intonation, but Miss Frank did not seem to be at all impressed by it, she simply shook her head and said :

“ Oh, Charlie! I did want some one with brains so much, and I am so sorry to find you are such a fool! ”

“ That’s very complimentary, but really I did not wish to intrude on your—well your—your *friend*, Mr. Brydon, by coming too early.”

This was another attempt at sarcasm, but somehow Mr. Benson felt he was not succeeding at sarcasm on this occasion. Frank rose very quietly, and laying her hand on Mr. Benson's arm, said :

"Charlie, you and I have been friends almost from childhood. I am in a trouble, and I thought you would help me; but, if you talk that way there is no use my telling you what I want you to do."

"What do you want me to do, Frank?"

"I want you to watch Robert Brydon; I want you to haunt him like his shadow. I want you to find out what secret there is between him and Arthur, and to know something of the man's past life."

Her manner had grown very earnest, and she clutched his arm with convulsive force as she finished.

"Well, that's cool, Frank; you press me rather too hard when you ask me to watch your lover, and find out something of his past life for you."

"My what?"

"Your lover."

"Charlie Benson, I never thought you were such a fool; what! that thing Brydon! he a lover of mine; you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"But don't you—"

"No, I don't. I have tried to get into this man's confidence because I suspected he had some secret power over Arthur, and I wanted to find out what it was, so that I might protect Arthur from a bad man, but you men are all fools. Brydon must needs think I was in love with him, and he has proposed and I have rejected him; and, of course, I cannot watch him myself now, so I want you to do it for me."

"You have rejected him?"

"Yes, I didn't mean to tell you, but as I have said it I suppose there is no great harm done."

Mr. Benson made no answer in words, but he indulged in the most extraordinary action he had ever ventured on with Miss Frank; he had known her for several years, but had always kept at a respectful distance; now he suddenly caught her in his arms and once or twice kissed her—three or four times. I am almost ashamed to say that Miss Frank seemed to like it, and didn't struggle a bit. The next half hour was passed in that imbecile condition which lovers always think indispensable to a first confession

of their mutual love. Miss Frank was the first to recover her self-possession and come back to the matter she had been discussing.

"So you see, Charlie dear, I want you to get intimate with Brydon, to find out who he associates with, and if possible solve the mystery which binds him so strongly to Arthur."

"Well, Frank, I'll try ; but 'pon my word I'd rather punch the fellow's head than shake hands with him ; but as you wish it, and it is for Arthur's sake, I shall cultivate Mr. Brydon very extensively ; and he had better look out for himself."

## CHAPTER VII.

### OUT OF THE HONEST WAY.

"HAS Mdlle. Seraphine returned from the Theatre yet?" asked Arthur Austin of the polite clerk of the St. Lawrence Hall.

"Yes, sir, she just came in a moment ago; here Jim, show this gentleman to No.—"

Arthur was shown Mdlle. Seraphine's room, and, in answer to his knock, received a rough invitation to "come in," which he accepted and found his wife half reclining on a sofa with a large tumbler of gin and water, which she was in the act of imbibing, momentarily suspended in her right hand. She looked for a moment at her visitor, finished the spirits, and then said,

"So you have come, you villain; I supposed you would, you knew it would be best for you."

Arthur paused for a moment and looked intently at her before replying; drunk as he was he could not but be struck at the great change to her appearance from what it had been four years before. On the stage he had not noticed it, but now, face to face, the false color of the rouge glowing on her cheek only lent intensity to the yellow, unhealthy color of the flabby skin; the fine lines of India ink under the eye-lashes, intended to impart brilliancy to the eyes, only served to show the dark circles under them, and to throw up in strong relief the glassy, filmish expression of the eyes themselves. The finely rounded form lost all its symmetry when released from its tight bracing, and showed only an unsightly mass of bloated humanity. The rich, sensuous lips, which looked so lovely and kissable from the front of the theatre, were smeared with vermillion, and the pungent odor of gin drove away all ideas of grace or beauty from them. Arthur saw her as she was, a drunken, besotted creature, without one spark of true womanhood about her, given over to the demon of drink and abandoning herself freely to all evil passions; he saw her, and even to his drunken mind came a feeling of repugnance, and he wondered if it could be possible that he had ever loved this creature. He did not pause long, but, advancing one step nearer to her, said:

"What do you want with me?"

"That's a pretty question for a husband to ask the wife he has deserted for four years. What do I want with you ? I want you to support me as your wife, as you ought to do ; I want you to put away that baby-faced doll you had with you to-night ; I want you to go back to the States with me, and live with me as my husband —I love you so much." She said this with great passion, and she threw all the bitterest contempt and scorn she was capable of into the last few words : "I would have you know, Arthur Austin, that I claim you as my husband, and I don't mean to allow any woman to take my place, unless I please that she should, and I don't please that yellow-haired child should do it."

"I thought you were dead, Effie."

"And was glad to think so, no doubt ?"

"God only knows how thankful I was at my supposed release."

"No doubt ; but you're not released, and I don't mean that you shall be yet awhile. I shall live a long time, you may depend on it. I mean to, just to spite you."

"Why did you send for me ?"

"I want to make arrangements with you."

"What arrangements ? God knows," he cried in the bitterness of his spirit, "the miserable plot of Brydon and yourself has borne enough wretched fruit already. The pair of you laid a very pretty snare for me ; I unconsciously walked into it ; I am caught. Now I know both of you well enough to know that you did not go to so much trouble and pains without hope of ultimate gain ; how much do you want ?"

"I want my old allowance renewed, and the same right you have taken yourself to marry whoever I please."

"I cannot pay you the money ; I am not able to afford it."

"Mr. Arthur Austin, I close my engagement here on Saturday night. Unless I have my first quarter's allowance, five hundred dollars, paid me before three o'clock on Friday, I will have you arrested for bigamy before ten o'clock on Saturday. Do as you please,—what I say I mean."

"Suppose I comply with your demands what guarantee have I that they will suffice, and that you will cease to annoy me ?"

"No guarantee but my word ; you ought to know that I can keep it when I please. Do you remember when you tried to shake me off by claiming a divorce ? Do you remember that I swore then to be even with you ? I am even with you now. You had better accept the terms I offer you, and these are the

terms : if you pay me two thousand dollars a year for five years, quarterly in advance, payable at any place I please to name, I will swear not to molest you in any way for that time : I to enjoy myself any way I please, and you to possess your tow-headed darling. At the end of that time I shall do as I please. Accept or refuse as you see fit, it is six of one and half a dozen of the other to me."

" Suppose I accept, what guarantee have I against Brydon ? "

" Bob will go with me ! "

" What ? "

" I will take care," said Miss Effie, guarding her speech more closely," that Mr. Brydon does not annoy you ? "

" You speak very confidently about Mr. Brydon."

" I do. I know more of his secrets. You may depend on it that I can make him do what I promise he will do. Do you accept my terms ? "

" Give me a few days to think them over."

" I will give you until twelve o'clock Wednesday. Will that suit you ? "

" Yes."

" Good night."

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Mr. Brydon did not sleep the sleep of the model young man he pretended to be that night, in fact, he tossed about for a long time without sleeping at all. He "reviewed the whole position," as he called it, and came to the conclusion that he had made a mistake when he selected Montreal as a good place to hang up his hat. In his present mood he would have greatly preferred Paris, or some quiet German watering-place where there are no unpleasant questions asked as long as a man can pay his way. Miss Effie's exhibition of temper and passion in the theatre had greatly discomposed him, and his estimation of that lady had fallen considerably. He had no wish or intention that she should so suddenly kill the goose which he expected to lay so many golden eggs ; and he made up his mind that he would in future play his little game alone. He had concocted a very neat little scheme in his own mind of how he would "get square" with Miss Frank for refusing him, by gradually drawing most of her fortune away through Arthur, helped out by the presence of Effie in Montreal ; but her sudden passion had shown him that she was a very unreliable agent to work with, and he tried hard to find

some way to make a "big haul," that's what he called it—and leave Canada. There was one vision that constantly recurred to him as he lay tossing on his bed, and that was a vision of seventy-five thousand dollars of "available funds," and, after much thought, he believed he had solved the problem of how the available funds of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. were to be appropriated to the personal use of Mr. Robert Brydon, and then he turned over, went to sleep, and slept happily and comfortably.

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Arthur Austin hesitated for some time before accepting the terms his wife offered him. He knew he would be utterly unable to carry out the agreement for any length of time, as he had simply promised to pay her more money than he was working for ; but in the miserable hope of "something turning up" to free him from his difficulty, he decided to temporize, and accordingly paid Miss Effie five hundred dollars, and agreed to pay her a like sum every three months. Of course he expected that she would leave Montreal at the close of her engagement at the theatre, but to his surprise she remained at the Hall day after day and week after week, and announced her intention of spending the summer here. For this result he was indebted to the influence of Mr. Brydon, that gentleman having made up his mind that he needed Miss Effie's presence for a short time in order to assist him in carrying out his plans with regard to the "big haul" he contemplated. Mr. Brydon studiously avoided her, at least he appeared to do so, but he managed to meet her nearly every day in private, and he kept her well informed of Arthur's movements, and so it happened that Miss Effie was constantly meeting Arthur in the most "accidental" manner. In his drives with Jessie he was almost certain to encounter Miss Effie, and she would smile so sweetly and bow so kindly that poor little Jessie began to be quite jealous of the bold-looking, handsome actress, who seemed so intimate with her husband. Arthur had told her that Effie was a friend of Brydon's and that he (Arthur) had only a very slight acquaintance with her ; but as the meetings continued, and the bowing and smiling grew more and more marked, Jessie began to be seriously grieved, and had many a hearty cry at what she considered Arthur's faithlessness to her. Arthur, for his part, was driven almost crazy by the continued presence of Effie, and the daily, almost momentary, risk he was running through her being

here. He abandoned himself more than ever to drink, and, for days at a time, scarcely knew what it was to be once thoroughly sober. He was ably assisted in his drunken orgies by Mr. Brydon, who, however, took good care not to get very drunk himself, and managed to be always able to attend to business, so that he was gradually getting the affairs of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. under his own control. There was one person who had long ago suspected that Brydon was trying to worm himself into the secrets of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co. for some purpose of his own, and that person was Miss Frank. To think and to act was synonymous with that energetic young lady, and she, therefore, wrote a long letter to her uncle, telling what habits Arthur had fallen into, and begging him to come home at once, as she feared matters were not going well at the office.

Mr. Lubbuck found it was impossible for him to leave England at the time he received Frank's letter. The winding up of his old partner's affairs proved more complicated than he had expected, and he found it would be necessary to remain in England some months longer. The news he received from Frank about Arthur affected him deeply; he felt hurt, grieved and angry at Arthur's conduct, and resolved to read him a severe lesson. He wrote to him, expressing himself very severely, and informing him that Mr. Lownds would leave England at once to take charge of the house during his, Mr. Lubbuck's, absence.

This letter sobered Arthur a little, and he really made an effort to break his habits of intemperance, but in vain. Mr. Brydon was constantly at his elbow, and Miss Effie was too regular in her annoying attentions to leave his mind very easy, and, as he became troubled again, he again fell into his bad habits.

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Mr. Lownds arrived about ten days after the letter. He was a small, wiry, active man of about two or three and thirty, close and sharp in business matters, fond of hard work, attentive to business, and having few pleasures outside of the office. Moderate and abstemious in all things himself, he was little disposed to view Arthur's excesses leniently, and he felt slightly prejudiced against him before he had seen him. Acquaintance, unfortunately, did not very much alter the first impression. Arthur sobered up for a few days, but in the course of a week had fallen back into his old habits, and sunk proportionately in Mr. Lownds' estimation. Mr. Lownds at once took the general management into his

own hands ; but Arthur still acted as cashier, although his power of attorney to sign for the firm had been cancelled, and Mr. Lownds signed all cheques, etc., himself.

Mr. Brydon was in high feather ; he took the pledge—so he said—the day of Mr. Lownds' arrival, and he was so attentive to business, and knew so much of the affairs of the firm, that he created quite a favorable impression on that gentleman. Mr. Brydon had not, however, forgotten "the available funds," and, as it was now getting near the opening of navigation, when the available funds would be actively employed, he bestowed more thought on them, and finally had everything arranged in his own mind to his entire satisfaction.

One morning, about a month after Mr. Lownds' arrival, Arthur was sent to Lachine on business which would probably detain him all day. It so happened that on that very day Mr. Lownds needed ten thousand dollars to send to Chicago as an advance on some grain he expected from there as soon as the river was open ; he, therefore, gave Mr. Brydon a cheque on the Merchants' Bank, where the firm had a balance of about twelve thousand dollars, and told him to get a draft on Chicago for the ten thousand dollars. Mr. Brydon speedily returned with the startling intelligence that there was only about two thousand dollars to the credit of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co., and that a cheque for ten thousand dollars had been paid to Mr. Austin a few days previously. Mr. Lownds was very much astonished ; he knew Arthur as a drunkard, but never once suspected him of being a thief. He went to the Bank and examined the cheque ; it was apparently filled up by Arthur, and signed with the signature of the firm. There seemed no doubt at all about it, and Mr. Lownds at once consulted the Chief of Police. The case was given to Cullen, who immediately formed his own conclusions, but said nothing about them, based on what he knew about Arthur, and Mr. Lownds did not, *viz.*, that he had two wives, and Cullen could see, what Mr. Lownds could not, a motive for the robbery. He had very little doubt that Arthur had left the city, but took all proper measures to ascertain the correctness of his suspicion. He found that Arthur had gone to Lachine, and following him there discovered, to his surprise, that he had returned to Montreal. Cullen was puzzled at this. It looked curious that Arthur should not take advantage of so good an opportunity to get across the line, and he thought that, perhaps, there may be a mistake somewhere and Arthur may not be guilty.

He returned to the city and went to Mr. Lubbuck's house; Arthur had not been home. It was now evening, and Cullen thought the only thing he could do was to put a man at the depot to see that Arthur did not escape that way, and watch the house himself on the chance of Arthur's returning there. About eight o'clock he accidentally met Arthur in the street. He was very drunk, and staggered from side to side. Cullen went up to him and, laying his hand on Arthur's shoulder, said :

"I am very sorry for it, Mr. Austin, but I have orders to arrest you. You are my prisoner."

"Arrested," said Arthur, a terrible fear coming over him that the worst must now be known ; "what for ?"

"Forgery," said Cullen, very quietly.

"It's a lie," exclaimed Arthur, greatly relieved to find that he was arrested on a charge of which he was innocent. "Who says I have committed a forgery ?"

"You had better not talk much, Mr. Austin," said Cullen, kindly, "I might have to use what you say as evidence against you. Mr. Lownds has made an affidavit that you have forged the name of the firm to a cheque for ten thousand dollars; you will learn all the particulars before the Police Magistrate to-morrow morning, you must go to the station with me now."

"Must I be locked up all night ?" asked Arthur, after a moment's pause. "Cannot I give bail for my appearance to-morrow morning ?"

"Not to-night, sir."

"But I must see Jessie, I must tell her—poor girl, poor girl ;" and he broke down entirely; the hot tears starting to his eyes, and his whole frame trembling with emotion as he thought of the shock this would be to Jessie in her present delicate condition.

"You won't be able to see Mrs. Austin to-night," said Cullen, "but," he added kindly ; "I will go and see her for you, if you like, and break it to her as easy as I can. Don't get down-hearted, perhaps you will be able to show it's all right to-morrow morning ;" he said this more to cheer him up than anything else. The charge was very strong, and the proof seemed pretty clear; still the fact of Arthur's returning to the city and his honest appearance of innocence weighed a good deal with the detective, and he felt by no means certain that Arthur was guilty.

Arthur was locked up in the Central Station for the night, and Cullen executed his unpleasant task of informing Jessie of what

had occurred. She took it much quieter than he had expected. Did not go into hysterics, nor make any great exhibition of her feelings; but the deadly pallor of her face, the short, quick catching of her breath, her painfully-constrained manner and unnatural quiet, showed how deeply the blow had struck, and it was all the more deadly because she bore it, and made no sign. Not for one moment did she believe him guilty, never for an instant did she doubt his integrity; she loved him, trusted him, believed in him too fondly, too implicitly, too truly for that, but there came over her a terrible fear, a nameless dread of something unseen, unknown, and undefined, which loomed up in fearful indistinctness behind this ridiculous charge, and terrified her more than she could express. Yet she kept seemingly calm, and asked Cullen the particulars of the case with an amount of quietness that surprised him, and caused his admiration of the delicate, fair-haired little creature, who bore up so nobly under misfortune, to increase considerably. She had asked him several questions with forced self-control, when Frank entered the room, then Jessie's courage suddenly gave way and she threw herself into her sister's arms, sobbing hysterically, "Oh Frank! Frank! Arthur is arrested, and I shall never be his wife again."

"Arthur arrested! What for; for drunkenness?"

"No, Miss," said Cullen, "I wish it was for that; but it's a good deal more serious."

"What is it for?"

"Forgery."

"It's a—it's not true," indignantly shouted Miss Frank, almost forgetting herself in the sudden heat of her indignation. "What would Arthur want to commit a forgery for?"

"That I don't know, Miss," replied Cullen, "but a cheque of Lubbuck, Lownds & Co.'s for \$10,000 has been forged on the Merchants' Bank. Mr. Lownds is very certain that the writing in the body of the cheque is Mr. Austin's, and the signature looks something like his writing; the teller says he paid the money to Mr. Austin."

"What does Arthur say?"

"He says, of course, that he's not guilty, and, to tell the truth, he don't act or look as if he was."

Miss Frank tenderly laid Jessie, who was still sobbing hysterically, on the sofa, and bending over her, and kissing her with more tenderness and gentleness than her usual manner seemed capable

of, she whispered, "don't cry and make yourself ill, Jessie dear, or you will only add to my difficulties in helping Arthur, by getting sick on my hands, and then I shall have to nurse you. Try and bear up as well as possible. You don't believe Arthur guilty, nor do I. I know he is a great fool, for he has had some trouble on his mind for a long time, and has not told you what it is, as he ought to have done; but he isn't a thief. I know it, and, please God, I'll prove it!"

"You will, Frank! Oh! bless you for that," and Jessie threw her arms around her sister and wept again, but they were calmer, almost happy, tears now. She had been accustomed from childhood to look up to Frank as some one who could never be wrong, and who could do almost everything. The force and strength of that young lady's character had always exercised a great control over Jessie's weaker, but more affectionate nature, and Frank's bold assertion of Arthur's innocence, and her announcement of her determination to stand by him, greatly re-assured Jessie, and she felt almost as if Arthur was free already.

Cullen stood in the centre of the room, silently watching the pair, and feeling more and more uncomfortable about the case he was engaged in. He is a tender-hearted man, and there is a soft spot under the left side of his waistcoat; and so it was no discredit to him that he found his handkerchief come into requisition once or twice, and experienced a sensation in the throat as if he was trying to swallow something which absolutely refused to go down. Frank did not keep him waiting very long; she left Jessie on the sofa, and, placing herself in front of Cullen, took a good look at him and then said:

"You look like a sensible man. Who are you?"

"I am Cullen, the detective."

"Very well, I'm glad of that. I want to see whether you are a good detective or not. Now who do you suspect of having committed this forgery?"

"Mr. Austin is the only person suspected; and the evidence against him—

"Fiddlesticks for your evidence," said Frank, contemptuously snapping her fingers; "you're a nice defective not to see that this is a plot to throw the guilt on Arthur and shield the real culprit. You detectives are all alike, you never find out anything unless it is rubbed under your nose."

"Well," replied Cullen, meditatively rubbing his nasal appendage, and rather nettled at Miss Frank's sharp attack, "if I did suspect anybody, it would not show me to be a smart detective if I told you who I suspected."

"That's true; and as you are afraid to tell me what you suspect, I will tell you what I am sure of; and that is, that this forgery was committed by that born devil, Brydon, who has managed in some way to throw the blame on Arthur."

"Whew!" whistled Mr. Cullen in astonishment; this new view of the case struck him so suddenly and unexpectedly that he momentarily forgot his usual politeness, and could not avoid giving vent to a slight whistle. Up to this moment he had never had any very serious doubts of Arthur's guilt; he wavered occasionally, but it seemed so clear to him that Arthur, goaded by the presence of his first wife in Montreal—he knew that, for Arthur had taken him fully into his confidence and set him to watch Effie,—and driven to despair at the danger constantly hanging over his head, had determined to leave the city, either with one of his wives or alone, and try and find peace elsewhere; and what more natural than that he should take advantage of his position to appropriate some funds to be used in commencing life in a new world? But now the few earnest words of Miss Frank had let in a flood of light on his mind; he was well acquainted with the peculiar part Mr. Brydon had played in the supposed death of Miss Effie Barron; Arthur had also told him that Mr. Brydon had been in love with Miss Effie, and it did not take the astute detective more than a few seconds "to take in the whole position" from his new standpoint. He saw in a moment how Mr. Brydon could at once satisfy his love, his revenge, and his cupidity by stealing the money himself, throwing the blame on Arthur and then quietly eloping with Miss Effie and his illgotten gains. It was easy enough to see it, but he knew it would be a very hard matter to prove. He looked with more respect at Frank, and at last said: "You may be right, Miss Williams, but it will be a terribly hard case to prove. I know something of Mr. Brydon, and I know he's a bad one, and not likely to try such a game unless he was pretty sure to win. Mr. Austin will have a hard matter to get out of his clutches, now he has got him."

"Ah! you know what the secret is between them?"

"I didn't say anything about a secret," said Cullen, hastily, rather surprised at Miss Frank's quickness.

“Don’t tell a story now, I can see you are not accustomed to it; you blushed as much as your whiskers would let you, and a man who blushes never makes a good liar. I know there is a secret and I mean to find it out, so you might as well tell me, for I have a man now on Robert Brydon’s track, and he will hunt him to death, but he will find out the cause of Brydon’s influence over Arthur.”

“Who is the man? perhaps he might help me in this case.”

“He might; we will go and see him together. Tell me what it is you know about Brydon?”

“Well, I’m not sure but what I ought to tell you now, but—” he paused, and cast a meaning glance at Jessie, who was still lying on the sofa, in response to which glance Miss Frank bestowed on him a knowing wink—she was not at all afraid of winking when she thought it would be more expressive than words—and crossing to Jessie, knelt by the sofa and laid her hand softly on her sister’s head:

“Jessie, darling, I have been talking to Mr. Cullen, and I think there is no doubt we can prove Arthur as innocent as we know he is, so don’t cry and make yourself miserable. You had better go to your room and try to get a little sleep; I am going to see Charlie Benson, I think he can help us.”

“What! at this time of night, Frank? it is nearly nine o’clock.”

“What difference does that make; I am able to take care of myself, and if I wasn’t I have a big detective who is going with me to take care of me. Mr. Cullen,” she continued, turning towards him, “I shall be ready in two minutes to go with you. Can I offer you a glass of wine, or anything else, while you wait for me?”

“No, I thank you, Miss, I never drink anything strong; but, if you’ll excuse me, as I haven’t had any dinner or supper, and I don’t know how long this job will last, I wouldn’t mind having something to eat.”

“No supper! come down stairs at once. I don’t believe in people working on empty stomachs, it breeds indigestion.”

Miss Frank only occupied a few minutes in making her preparations, and joined Cullen in the dining-room before he had quite finished a hasty supper.

“Now, Mr. Cullen, we are alone, and you can tell me what you know about Brydon.”

“I am doubtful whether I ought to tell you at all, as I promised

Mr. Austin to say nothing about it ; but it might be useful now to use against Mr. Brydon, and I suppose it must be known some day."

"Promised Mr. Austin ? Why, does Arthur know you are acquainted with the secret ? "

"He told it to me himself when I went to New York and Savannah to make some inquiries for him."

"Inquiries ! What about ? "

"About his first wife."

"His first wife ! Why, man, you are crazy. Arthur was never married until he married Jessie."

"He was married about six years ago to Miss Effie Barron in Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania."

"It is singular that Arthur never mentioned it to any of us ; he never said he was a widower."

"He is not a widower."

"What ! man, man, what do you mean ? "

"That his first wife is alive, and is in this city now."

"Oh, Heavens !" exclaimed Frank, springing to her feet as the whole truth flashed upon her, and then sinking back again nearly fainting, while she muttered, "Poor Jessie, poor Jessie, it will kill her."

Frank did not faint, however, she was too strong-minded for that, she poured out and drank a glass of water, and after a slight pause to recover herself, said in a low, husky voice, "Tell me all about it."

Cullen told her all he knew of Arthur's marriage to Effie Barron, of her supposed death, of Mr. Brydon's appearance on the scene, of his own exertions in the case, and finally of Miss Effie's appearance in Montreal as Mdlle. Seraphine, and of the watch he had kept on her, by which he had discovered that she met Brydon frequently, and that there was, no doubt, a perfect understanding between them.

Frank sat quietly watching him until he finished, then she thought a little while, and at last said, "I fully believe Arthur thought she was dead ; it is a diabolical plot between this woman and Brydon, but I'll defeat it yet as sure as my name is Frank Williams."

She brought her hand down on the table with a mighty smack that made Cullen jump, and as he looked into her calm grey eye ablaze with passion, her face slightly flushed, and her mouth firmly set, he thought Mr. Brydon would be very likely to discover before long that he had met his match at last.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OUT OF THE COURT.

MR. CHARLES BENSON had been having an alternately very uncomfortable and very ecstatic existence for the past few weeks. He had not previously had the slightest idea how much he loved Frank, and he was perfectly happy while he was in her company, nor had he known how cordially he disliked Mr. Brydon, and he was proportionately uncomfortable when he was in that gentleman's company; for he made it a point of honor to "cultivate" him as he had promised Frank he would; but the more he cultivated him the less he liked him, and his reward in the way of information obtained from Brydon scarcely repaid him for his trouble. Indeed he found out nothing about Brydon except that he was very, very intimate with Mdlle. Seraphine, and met her frequently, but generally at some out-of-the-way place around the mountain, and seldom visited her room at the Hall. Of course he was ignorant of the relation in which Mdlle. Seraphine stood to Arthur, and her intimacy with Brydon did not specially attract his attention.

He had written to Captain John Young of the New York detective force, but received no information from him, except that Brydon had been discharged by Austin & Son some years ago, and it was supposed there was something wrong, and that he afterwards kept a faro bank in the Bowery, and had been pulled by the police. He had been absent from New York for three or four years, and nothing was known of him. This by no means satisfied Mr. Benson, and he sat on the evening of Arthur's arrest, in his boarding house in Bleury street, with his feet resting on the stove, meditatively smoking a pipe, and thinking he would go and tell Frank that it was no use trying any longer to pump Mr. Brydon, as he absolutely refused to be pumped. It was rather late for a call, being after eight; and, Frank being always particular about his coming early, he thought he would postpone his visit until the next evening, and make one more endeavor to "cultivate" Mr. Brydon, by passing the evening playing billiards with him,—although that gentleman's wonderful

skill with the cue made it rather an expensive luxury, even if nothing more than the game, drinks and cigars were played for. He was disappointed, however, for, when he reached Mr. Brydon's boarding-house, he found that gentleman had not been to supper, and had not come in since. Mr. Benson felt rather surprised at this. Mr. Brydon was a man who so constantly and persistently got the best of his fellow-men in everything that Mr. Benson thought it somewhat suspicious that he should allow the landlady to gain one supper on him, and he went home slowly, trying to guess what could have occupied Mr. Brydon's evening. On reaching home he was rather surprised when he opened the door to find Miss Frank seated in front of the fire, and Cullen leaning against the mantelpiece talking to her.

"Frank ! Why, darling, what has happened ? What brings you here ?" he exclaimed, seizing Miss Frank in his arms and kissing her, without the slightest regard for Cullen's presence.

"Charlie, a terrible thing has happened—Arthur has been arrested for forgery."

"For what ?"

"Forgery ! but oh ! Charlie, you can't be fool enough to think he is guilty ?"

"I'll be—well, I don't think he is."

Mr. Benson was considerably surprised, but he had got accustomed in the last half-hour to being surprised, and, therefore, he quickly got over his astonishment, and quietly thought the matter over while Cullen was finishing his statement of what he knew of Arthur's first marriage.

"It's all stuff and nonsense," said Mr. Benson when Cullen had finished. "I begin to understand this fellow Brydon now; it's as clear as crystal; he was in love with this actress and has been trying to revenge himself on Arthur for cutting him out. As to the question of bigamy, no sane jury would convict Arthur on that charge, while the conspiracy between Brydon and Effie Barron could be proved. What I am afraid of is that Brydon has been more careful in this forgery business, and that Arthur may be found guilty of the very crime of which he is innocent."

"How can he be found guilty ?" said Frank, "he never committed this forgery."

"My dear girl," replied Mr. Benson "when you know as much of law and lawyers as I do, you will find that the more innocent a man is, and the less he has done, the more likely he is to suffer

heavily when he gets under the power of the law. Steal a pocket-handkerchief and you will be sent to prison for a year ; knock a man's brains out with a stick of wood and the jury will bring you in innocent of even a common assault. If Arthur had committed a forgery I feel confident he would be acquitted, but, as he is innocent, I am afraid we will have great difficulty in clearing him.

“ If this forgery was committed by Brydon,” said Cullen, “ and, he got the ten thousand dollars, he won’t keep it here ; he will send it somewhere where it will be safe.”

“ Perfectly correct,” said Mr. Benson, “ and the probability is largely in favor of his sending it to New York. I am pretty well acquainted with the brokers in New York, having been in a Wall street office for two years, and I mean to start for New York to-morrow morning.”

“ You had better engage a lawyer for Mr. Austin before you go, sir,” said Cullen.

“ Right again ; I will engage two, and if they can’t pull him through, then I am afraid there is no way of getting him clear.”

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Arthur Austin was brought before the Police Magistrate next morning, and, after a preliminary examination, was fully committed for trial at Queen’s Bench.

The case against him was very strong, and a new and alarming fact was disclosed by Mr. Lownds’ affidavit that, not only had a cheque been forged on the Merchants’ Bank, but all the available funds—amounting to some sixty thousand dollars, in bonds, etc., had been abstracted from the safe where they were kept, and to which safe no one but Arthur and Mr. Lownds had a key. With regard to the forgery, the teller testified to having paid the money to Arthur, but said that Arthur was so drunk at the time he (the teller) thought it was scarcely safe to trust him with that amount and advised him not to take it. The handwriting in the cheque was identified by the clerks in the office as being probably Arthur’s, but none of them, except Mr. Brydon, could swear positively to it, it looked like Arthur’s writing, but there was a little difference.

Mr. Brydon’s testimony—given with a great deal of pretended reluctance—was very damning. He swore positively to the writing in the cheque, and produced a \$100 bill, which the teller of the Bank had sworn was one he had given to Arthur, and which

Mr. Brydon swore Arthur had lent him the day after the cheque was forged, and an I O U of Mr. Brydon's for a like amount, bearing the same date, was found in Arthur's pocket. He also swore that he had seen Arthur send a package by express the same day the forgery occurred, and that the parcel was addressed to New York, and appeared to contain money. The books of the express Company shewed that such a package had been sent on that day, but the clerk could not identify Arthur as the man who sent it. Two lawyers appeared for the prisoner, and, by their advice, he simply put in a plea of "not guilty," and reserved all attempts at defense until the trial took place, which would be in about three weeks' time. Charlie Benson had explained the whole case to them, and they came to the conclusion that it would be better that Mr. Brydon should not think he was suspected, and that the time intervening between the commitment and the trial would afford ample time to make any inquiries as to any attempts which might have been made to dispose of the stolen funds. It was agreed that Mr. Benson should go to New York and endeavor to find out if any of the bonds had been offered to the brokers there, and the lawyers were to institute the same inquiries in Montreal. Mr. Benson left by the afternoon train and nothing was heard of him for some time, and the lawyers began to despair of his success.

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The change which came over Arthur from the moment of his arrest was something remarkable. He grew strangely calm and cool; he refused to be admitted to bail—which could have been easily obtained, as he had numerous influential and wealthy friends—and preferred to be committed to jail for trial. He stoutly asserted his innocence; but was forced to confess that, on the day of the forgery, he was so drunk for the greater part of the day that he had no recollection of what he had done, and that he might have drawn the money from the bank without being conscious of it. He was certain, however, that he could not have filled up the cheque, as when he was drunk he was unable to write legibly, although he could walk and talk tolerably well. His lawyers spoke to him about his first marriage. He was, of course, surprised that they should know of it, but gave them a full account of the whole affair, and explained his connection with Brydon and Mdlle. Seraphine since he had been in Montreal in a way which gave the lawyers hope that they might pull him through in spite of the hard facts against him.

Jessie visited him in prison. Frank did not come with her the first time, and they met alone, thanks to the courtesy of the Governor of the jail, who allowed the interview to take place in his own parlor instead of the general ward for untried prisoners in which Arthur was confined. It was a long and painful interview, for Arthur told her everything; the time for concealment was past, and Jessie learnt the terrible fact that she was about to become a mother, and yet was no wife. She bore up bravely, more bravely than could have been expected of her under the circumstances, and clung to her love with all a true woman's fondness and devotion.

"Arthur," she said, "you were wrong to hide this thing from me, you ought to have told me as soon as you knew it; but it is too late for reproaches now. In the sight of God and man, I am your wife; I love you as truly now as I ever did, and I shall never cease to love you in this world or the next."

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The trial took place at the regular sitting of the Court of Queen's Bench. The evidence was very strong against Arthur. Mr. Lownds testified to the forgery, and the Bank teller identified Arthur as the person to whom he had paid the money. The cross-examination of these witnesses was very slight, the lawyers for the defence appearing to be reserving their forces for something which was to come.

It was in the afternoon when the case was called, and it was nearly four o'clock when Mr. Robert Brydon stepped into the box. Both counsel for the prisoner gave their gowns an extra pull up at the shoulder—lawyer's gowns somehow always *will* slip down a little at the shoulder—as if the "something" they had been waiting for had come, and both began to take copious notes of the evidence as it progressed. It was in substance very much the same as he had given before the Police Magistrate, but had evidently been very carefully prepared.

While his evidence was being given a boy came into the Court with a telegram for Miss Frank, which that lady read with great interest and immediately had it passed to Arthur's counsel who perused it with great attention. The two lawyers then laid their heads together and conversed in an animated whisper for some moments; the taking of notes was suspended and their attention was entirely diverted from the case, until the prosecuting Attorney, in the course of his examination of the witness, said :

"Mr. Brydon, you have known the prisoner for a long time; has he always borne a good character?"

"Yes."

"Do you know of any reason why he should so suddenly have changed his nature and committed this robbery?"

"I know one reason," said Mr. Brydon, speaking with assumed reluctance, "and that is that Arthur Austin had a wife living at the time of his marriage with Miss Williams; his first wife is now in Montreal, and is, I believe, about to enter proceedings against him for bigamy. Austin knew this, and he may, perhaps, have thought it best for him to take all the available funds he could lay his hands on, and leave the city."

There was dead silence in the Court for nearly a minute after this announcement, and then the Prosecuting Attorney turned to the prisoner's counsel and said:

"Gentlemen, the witness is yours."

The leading counsel for Arthur rose, but instead of beginning the cross-examination of the witness he addressed himself to the Court as follows:

"Your Honor, it is now nearly five o'clock, and I would respectfully ask that the cross-examination of this witness be postponed until to-morrow morning. It is impossible to finish the case to-night, and I have just received a very important telegram from New York, informing me that some witnesses who are very essential to the case will be here to-morrow morning. I would also ask that the witness be detained as it is very important that he should be here when the Court opens."

"Have you any objection to showing me the telegram?" asked the Judge.

"None, I will read it." He looked straight at Brydon to watch the effect of the telegram on him, and read as follows:

New York, 2 o'clock.

"MISS F. WILLIAMS, Montreal,—Have found out enough to clear Arthur of both charges. Evidence complete. Leave with witnesses to-day. Keep an eye on Brydon, he will be wanted."

"CHARLIE BENSON."

## CHAPTER IX.

### OUT OF THE DETECTIVE'S OFFICE.

MR. BENSON did not find his task in New York an easy one. He did not find so many of his old friends in Wall street as he expected. "Black Friday," "the collapse in Mariposa," "the big rise in Central," and other prominent events in that speculative locality had taken place during Mr. Benson's absence from the home of American gambling, and many of his friends had been "on the wrong side," and had been squeezed dry by the bulls and bears, and had retired sadder and wiser men, but infinitely poorer ones also. Wall street brokers are not, as a rule, communicative men; if they are very anxious and willing to give you "a point," you may be pretty sure "the point" is the wrong way; and it is not at all likely that brokers to whom he was partially unknown would tell Mr. Benson that they were dealing in bonds or securities which were known to have been stolen, or inform him which of them had received ten thousand dollars which were known to have been obtained on a forged cheque. His only way of gaining the information he wanted was through his old fellow-clerks; but most of them had developed into full-blown brokers, or had speculated, got ruined, and "left the street." The two or three that he found in their old positions either knew nothing of either bonds or money, or knew too much to say anything, and Mr. Benson found that his acquaintance in Wall street availed him nothing. It took him a week to arrive at this conclusion, and when he had arrived at it he felt rather discouraged; he had counted surely on being able to trace some of the bonds or securities by their numbers. He had obtained a list of numbers, etc., of the securities from Mr. Lownds, who had found it in Arthur's desk;—but his efforts were unavailing, and, although he left a printed description of the various securities with every broker, nothing was known of them, and he began to fear that they had either not been placed upon the market or had been sent elsewhere than New York. He applied to Captain Young of the detective force, and offered him five

thousand dollars for the recovery of the securities—it is no use trying to get a detective in New York to do anything unless you offer him a big reward—but nothing came of it. Day after day, Mr. Benson's spirits fell more and more, and when the first of June came, and he had discovered nothing, his spirits fell to zero, and he very nearly abandoned his task as hopeless. Captain Young told him the same story every time he called on him; the bonds had not been offered on the market, and nothing was known of Mr. Brydon. On the fourth of June Mr. Benson sat in his room at the Hoffman House after dinner, ruminating on his failure, and thinking himself the most miserable fellow in New York. Again and again he read over the following telegram received a few minutes before from Miss Frank: "What are you about? Why don't you find out something at once? Arthur is to be tried to-morrow and will be convicted unless you do something. Please do something." And the more he read it, the more convinced he became that he could not "do something." At last, in sheer desperation, he put on his hat and started for the police headquarters to see Captain Young, and find out if he could "do something." He strolled leisurely down Broadway, puffing at a very doubtful cigar, for which he had been charged a quarter, and which obstinately refused to "draw," and thinking whether it would not be better for him to telegraph Arthur's counsel that he had "done something," and that he must get the trial postponed until the next term. The idea did not strike him as very brilliant, but he thought postponement would be better than nothing, and he had almost decided to send the telegram when just as he was passing Wallack's theatre, that prince of ticket speculators, Gus. Hamilton, accosted him with, "Want a ticket, sir. Good seats in the orchestra or dress circle. House very full. Can't get any seats at the box office." Mr. Benson paused for a moment, and, looking at the posters on the side of the entry way, saw advertized, "Last night of the season. Last appearance of Mr. Lester Wallack in Rosedale." He was a great admirer of Lester Wallack, and as he had not seen him act for some time he thought he would go in "for an hour or so;" he, therefore, invested to the extent of a dollar and a half with the obliging Mr. Hamilton, and got a pretty good seat in the dress circle. When a man goes to Wallack's to see "Rosedale" "for an hour or so," he generally stays until the performance is over, and it was a quarter past eleven when Mr. Benson left the theatre. It was too

late then, he thought, to see Captain Young, and he walked down Fourteenth street to Delmonico's to get some supper, his dinner having been rather light, and nature reminded him that she needed support. He entered that fashionable restaurant, and was making his way to a vacant table near a window opening on Fifth Avenue, when a gentleman who was sitting at one of the centre tables with a couple of young ladies, suddenly rose and came towards him, exclaiming,

“ Why, Charlie, old boy, where did you drop from ? ”

“ Fred, old fellow, I'm delighted to see you. I've been wondering several times that I have not met you. I called at Clarke, Dodge & Co.'s, but the boy in the office at the time told me you had left, and did not know where you were.”

“ Yes, I left them over a year ago. I am with Frank Worth & Co. now. Come over to our table and take supper with us. I'll introduce you to some nice girls.”

Mr. Benson went, was duly introduced to the “ nice girls,” and chatted for a quarter of an hour on unimportant topics, varying his conversation with a spirited attack on an excellent chicken salad—you can't get chicken salad in perfection anywhere but at Delmonico's—and an occasional sip of champagne. His friend, Mr. Fred Parsons, and his party had been to Niblo's and the young ladies were rather ecstatic about the scenery of the “ Black Crook,” and the wonderful dancing of the beautiful young ladies in very scant clothing. After the salad had been finished, and theatrical matters pretty well discussed, conversation flagged a little, and Mr. Parsons found time to ask Benson something about his own affairs.

“ Well, Charlie,” he said, after rather an awkward pause, “ where have you been, and what have you been doing, the last two years ? ”

“ I've been in my native city, Montreal ; you know I left New York to go there to my father, who is in business there, and I have been with him ever since.”

“ And what brings you to New York ? ”

“ Well,” replied Mr. Benson, rather hesitatingly, “ partly business, partly pleasure,” he did not want to tell Mr. Parsons exactly what business he was on, and how miserably he had failed.

“ Oh, yes ! I know you Montreal chaps seem to be lucky. You've come on to invest, I suppose. By-the-bye, do you remember Brydon who used to be with Austin & Son some five years ago ? Of

course you don't—that was before your time in Wall street. Well, he seems to have hit a fat thing in Montreal. I hope you were in with him."

"No, I wasn't," half gasped Mr. Benson. "I know Brydon; what fat thing has he been into? I never heard of it in Montreal."

"No! Why, he sent us on a lot of bonds and other things three or four weeks ago, and ordered them all to be sold and invested in New York Central and Erie; he knows what he is about, both stocks are sure to rise."

"Oh, yes! he knows—that is, I know—how much did he send?" said Mr. Benson, in such a strange, excited manner that his friend, instead of replying, asked:

"Charlie, old boy, what's the matter? You don't look well."

"I'm all right; how much? Tell me quickly how much?"

"I don't know—something like fifty thousand, I think."

"I've got him," half shouted Mr. Benson, "D——n him, I've got him, and I've 'done something after all;'" he was so much excited that he brought his hand down with a sudden slap on the table—mistaking it, no doubt, for Mr. Brydon's head. The ladies screamed a little, and the polite waiter, almost strangled in a white tie, slid deferentially up to the table to see if the gentleman had not been taking too much wine.

"What is the matter, Charlie?" said Mr. Parsons, a little alarmed about his friend's sanity. "Are you ill?"

"All right, old fellow," said Mr. Benson, regaining his composure, "I'm all right now. Excuse me, ladies," he continued, bowing to them, "you can have no idea of the importance of the information Fred has given me, or you would forgive my apparent rudeness; let me hope you will forgive me any way, and I will not offend again." The ladies, of course, bowed forgiveness, but looked uncomfortable, and the one to whom Mr. Parsons seemed devoted gave that gentleman a very meaning nod, and pushed her chair back a little, intimating that it was time to go. Mr. Parsons was greatly astonished at Mr. Benson's warmth of manner; but he managed to stammer out:

"My information, old boy, what do you mean?"

"Nothing," said Mr. Benson, who had quite recovered his composure; "I was a little astonished at something you said, but this is not the place to talk about it. Can you call at the Hoffman tonight for half an hour? You will do me a great favor, and the matter is urgent and important!"

"All right, old fellow, I will be there in about—" he hesitated, looked at his young lady, she shook her head, he sighed, and then added, "in half an hour."

The party left the restaurant, Mr. Parsons to escort the two young ladies home, and Mr. Benson to rush up Fifth Avenue to the Hoffman House, as though his life depended on his being there before Mr. Parsons. Once arrived at the hotel he stationed himself at the entrance, and impatiently awaited Mr. Parsons—that gentleman was late; he found that he had more "last words" to say to his young lady than he had thought of, and many times he had to stop her as she was going from the door to tell her something very important, and to—well, never mind, most of us, I suppose, know how a fellow feels when he is talking nonsense (he thinks it sound, common sense) to the girl he loves, or thinks he loves, at the door of her house, late at night, when he knows he ought to go away at once, but doesn't want to, and generally doesn't under an hour.

Mr. Benson got awfully impatient, and stamped up and down the pavement in the most restless manner, but that did not hurry Mr. Parsons, and it was nearly one o'clock before he arrived at the Hoffman House.

Mr. Benson at once took Mr. Parsons up to his room, and explained fully to him the nature of his business in New York, and how the information of Brydon's having sent a large amount of bonds, &c., from Montreal, immediately after the robbery would affect the case.

Mr. Parsons had known Arthur Austin when he was one of the luminaries of Wall street and it was an honor to know him, and he was ready and willing to help him now. He told Mr. Benson that, some three or four weeks since, the firm by whom he was employed had received a letter from Brydon, who was an old customer of theirs, enclosing a large amount of United States bonds and other securities, with orders to sell them, and make other investments. They had received no gold or notes. Mr. Parsons did not know the numbers of the bonds, &c., but promised to get a list next morning, and offered to accompany Mr. Benson to Montreal.

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Mr. Benson slept happily and contentedly that night, although he dreamt a little; but his dreams only added to his happiness, for he dreamt only two dreams, in one of which he saw Mr. Bry-

don hung up by the neck; and in the other he (Mr. Benson) was leading Miss Frank to the altar. He dreamt these dreams over and over again, and awoke in the morning in a great state of ecstacy, feeling that he was much more than a match for Mr. Brydon, and very confident that he would soon prove it to the great dissatisfaction of that gentleman. He met Mr. Parsons at the time agreed on; but was greatly disappointed to find that the bonds and securities sent on by Brydon did not agree in any particular with the list found in Arthur's desk. Mr. Parsons was quite sure about the numbers, denominations, &c., of the securities received, and Mr. Benson felt thoroughly nonplussed. At last he thought he would call on Captain Young, and see if that clear-headed detective could throw any light on the subject.

They found Captain Young in his office, talking to a rather dilapidated-looking individual, who rose on their entrance, and, turning himself out of the room, said he would call again in an hour.

The Captain heard Mr. Benson's story, paused for a moment to consider, and then said :

" Mr. Benson, your case is as good as finished; the list of securities you have is a forged one, put in the drawer it was found in by Brydon to throw suspicion on the wrong track. We have been trying hard to find bonds and other securities which either don't exist, or are out of the market, while the stolen bonds have been quietly disposed of through one of the most respectable firms on Broad street. It was a clever dodge of Brydon's; he must be a mighty sharp customer, and it is some credit to get square with him, but the game can be spoiled easy enough now. You want to take Mr. Parsons and, if possible, another witness, on to Montreal with Brydon's letter; you also want a good expert to compare the letter with Brydon's writing in the books of the firm with the forged cheque. It is just about as easy a case as I ever saw, and it is almost dead sure to be all right. I wish I could say as much for another case I am engaged in, but that is a tough one."

" What is it? " said Mr. Benson, not feeling the least interest, but simply because the detective seemed interested in it, and appeared anxious to tell the story.

" Well, you see it is a case of mistaken identity, and has led to some queer developments. Something like six months ago a man calling himself Richard Cranston went to Richmond, Va., put up at Spottswood House, and cut quite a swell for a few days. He

opened an account in the First National Bank of Richmond, depositing a couple of thousand dollars in bills, and got very much liked about the hotel on account of his easy, pleasant way, and the strong Southern principles he advocated. After about a week he went into a tobacco speculation, and bought several hundred cases to be shipped to New York. It was a pretty big purchase, amounting to between six and seven thousand dollars, and he paid in a cheque of the cashier of the National Bank of Commerce, New York, for five thousand dollars, and drew against it. The cashier of the First National Bank, Richmond, was a little doubtful about this cheque, so he telegraphed to New York and found that it was a forgery. Of course, payment was stopped, the tobacco not shipped, and a warrant issued for Mr. Cranston's arrest; but he had, somehow or other, got wind of the affair, had disappeared, has not since been found. A few days after he left it was discovered that the bills he had paid in when opening his account were counterfeits, and the Bank determined to make an effort to secure Mr. Cranston, although they had not lost very much by him. You see, this sort of thing has been tried several times in Richmond and "an example" was wanted. The Bank offered \$1,000 reward for Cranston's arrest, and Brownson, of the Richmond force, came on here and applied to me, as it was thought that Cranston had come to New York—somehow, people *will* think that all the rascals in the world come to New York; but, between you and I, I think that New York exports more thieves, burglars, and rascals generally than she imports. Brownson and I worked up the case together, and we traced Mr. Cranston to the St. Charles Hotel, where we found that he and his wife had been staying for a few days. They had left; and we could not get any trace of Cranston until about ten days ago, when, by chance, I discovered that Richard Cranston was living out at Flatbush. Now comes in the funny part. I arrested Cranston, and telegraphed for Brownson and the cashier of the First National Bank of Richmond, both of whom knew Cranston well by sight, to come on and identify him. They came on and did identify him; but Cranston pleaded ignorance of the charge, and proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that he could not have committed the crime with which he was charged. He showed by numerous respectable witnesses that he had not been out of Brooklyn for more than a day or two at a time, for over two years; and on the very day the forged cheque was presented in Richmond he was in the Second Precinct

Station House, arrested for drunkenness. It was the clearest *alibi* I ever saw ; but still it would have been hard for him to get off, only that the story he told, and the way he told it, was so plausible that we were forced to believe that he was not the Richard Cranston that we wanted. This Cranston is a peculiar looking man—you saw him here when you entered—with long shaggy red hair and whiskers, and rather marked features. Now it seems that there is another man who looks as much like Cranston as his own brother could—only Cranston hasn't got a brother, so he don't exactly know how he would look. The only material difference is that the other man's hair is black, but a bottle of hair dye would soon set that all right ; and Cranston says that if they were both dressed alike he could scarcely tell which was himself, and which the other fellow. You see, Cranston—who turns out to be a very respectable man, although not well off, and addicted to going on a spree once in a while—owes this Bill Gangle, as he calls himself—although, I suppose, that is not his real name—a grudge on an old score, and wants to get square with him. It appears that some six or seven years ago, Cranston married a ballet girl and she turned out a bad one, they often do, and ran away from him, and took up with Gangle. Cranston does not care much about her ; but it isn't pleasant for a man to have another man run away with his wife, and then steal his name and commit forgery under it, and so Cranston wants to get square."

"I hope he will," said Mr. Benson in an absent way, feeling rather bored, and not more than half understanding the story ; "and I hope he will find his wife."

"Oh ! he don't care much about her ; it isn't likely he would be very anxious to find such a bad lot as Effie Barron."

"Who ?" shouted Mr. Benson, now fully interested. "Who did you say ?"

"Why, his wife, Effie Barron."

"I've got it," exclaimed Mr. Benson, throwing his arms in his excitement around the astonished Captain. "I've done something now, and no mistake. It's all right, hurrah !"

"You've got me, certainly," said Young, somewhat surprised, "but what else have you got ?"

"Why, don't you see ? Of course you can't see—you don't know—I didn't tell you—can't you understand ? No, I don't suppose you can."

"Most certainly I cannot understand what you have just said. What do you mean?"

"I mean this," said Mr. Benson, making an effort to be calm, "that if Effie Barron married Richard Cranston six or seven years ago, she was a married woman when she committed bigamy by marrying Arthur Austin; and Robert Brydon and Richard Cranston No. 2 are one and the same person, and—and—I've done something; hurrah!"

"I wish," said Young, quietly, "you would compose yourself and explain what you mean so that I can understand it."

Mr. Benson rapidly collected himself and told Captain Young the whole story, so far as he knew it, of Arthur's marriage, etc. The Captain sat quietly listening until Mr. Benson had finished, and then said, "I can straighten this thing out."

"I am sure you can," said Mr. Benson, rather too confidently.

"What is the reward?" asked practical Captain Young.

"You get \$1,000 reward for Brydon's arrest from the Richmond Bank," answered Mr. Benson, "and I will give you the same amount if you can take Cranston to Montreal and prove that he was married to Effie Barron before she married Arthur Austin."

"Make it \$2,500 and expenses paid, and I'll fix the thing all right in Montreal to-morrow," said practical Captain Young.

"All right," said Mr. Benson, "consider it a bargain."

"Put it there," said Captain Young, extending a large, hard, brawny hand and holding it palm upwards.

Mr. Benson "put it there" by bringing his right hand down heartily into the open palm of the Captain, and the two men shook hands on the agreement.

A short while afterwards Mr. Benson sent to Montreal the telegram which closed the last chapter.

## CHAPTER X.

### OUT OF THE WORLD.

IT was not a very difficult matter to get Arthur's trial postponed until the next morning, and Mr. Brydon found himself a sort of honorary prisoner in the hands of High Constable Bissonette, who was exceedingly civil, polite and accommodating to him, but by his vigilance debarred Mr. Brydon's one great hope now, that of effecting a bolt. Finding there was no chance of escape Mr. Brydon became affable; he had plenty of money about him and he proposed a little supper and a cigar; Bissonette refused supper, as the bosom of his family was waiting for him to repose on it for the evening meal, but he did not mind taking a cigar to smoke after supper. Cigars were obtained and under the influence of a gentle whiff Mr. Brydon obtained permission to walk as far as his boarding house, accompanied by Constable Lafontaine, and obtain a clean shirt, collar, etc., which he declared he was greatly in need of. He was only a few minutes in his room and the Constable was with him all the time, yet he managed to take something out of the bureau and put it in his pocket, and he seemed greatly pleased at what he had done.

Mr. Benson and his witnesses arrived next morning, the case was continued, and did not occupy a great deal of time. A genuine list of the bonds, etc., was found in a private drawer of the safe, where no one had thought of looking for it—it being said that the list had been found in Arthur's desk—and the evidence of Mr. Parsons and the experts fully cleared Arthur, and after a very short trial the Judge instructed the jury to dismiss the complaint which was accordingly done. Arthur's counsel then formally moved for the discharge of the prisoner which was granted, and Arthur Austin came from the prisoner's dock to the floor of the Court a free man and received the hearty congratulations of his friends. But there was one whose congratulations he valued more than all and that was the one he had always loved, and whom he now knew was really and truly his lawful wife. There was quite a pause when Arthur came out of the dock and his friends crowded

around him, and the Judge good-naturedly waited a few minutes for the excitement to subside before the next case was called.

There was one person who did not feel particularly elated at Arthur's acquittal, and he, of course, was Mr. Brydon. That gentleman had not as yet been formally arrested and was still a sort of honorary prisoner, seemingly not under control, but really watched constantly by two or three constables, and as he had been brought up for cross-examination at the opening of the trial, but dismissed to make way for more important witnesses, he was still in court and was standing in front of the reporter's desk when Mr. Austin was formally discharged. Arthur passed quite close to him as he crossed the court to speak to Jessie, and Mr. Brydon's lips twitched convulsively, and his right hand stole quietly into the breast pocket of his coat. He controlled himself, however, and while Jessie was still in Arthur's arms he advanced towards the pair and said :

" So glad, dear boy, to see you acquitted ; allow me to congratulate you on your triumph—but it will not be for long," he continued savagely, suddenly changing his tone and manner, " not for long, Arthur Austin ; you have won against me all the time, but I'll trump your last trick or my name is not Robert Brydon ! "

Quick as thought he withdrew his right hand from his coat pocket, a bright shining barrel gleamed for one moment in the air, then came a sharp ringing report, a loud scream of agony, and Arthur Austin fell on the floor of the Court a dead man. There was scarcely a quiver of the flesh, hardly a movement of the muscles, the bullet went straight to the heart and death was instantaneous. Ere the horrified spectators could attempt to seize him Mr. Brydon had placed the barrel of the pistol in his own mouth and pulled the trigger.

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My story is almost done. The report of Mr. Brydon's pistol evoked an expression of terror from almost all the astonished spectators, but above all rose one scream, one outburst of heart agony, as Jessie threw herself on the lifeless form of her murdered husband. For a moment all was wild terror and confusion ; but the Judge quickly recovered his equanimity and restored order and quiet by his prompt and self-possessed action. It was at once discovered that Arthur was dead, there was no question about that ; and it was feared that Jessie's spirit had followed that of the one she loved to the shadow land. Medical help was speedily

obtained, and Jessie, in a state of unconsciousness, was removed to her home closely attended by Miss Frank, whose medical knowledge had proved of some account, as her quick and effective treatment of Jessie showed. No one seemed to consider Mr. Brydon, and he lay on the floor a mangled mass of humanity, until a carriage was obtained to take Jessie home; then Miss Frank turned to His Honor the Judge, as she was leaving the Court, and said:

“That wretch Brydon is not dead. Take good care of him and get him well, for I mean to see him hanged.”

Miss Frank was right. Mr. Brydon was not dead; the bullet he had meant to penetrate his brain had been misdirected, and had passed through the back of his neck, inflicting a dangerous, but not of necessity mortal, wound. He had ample attendance, and was conveyed as soon as practicable to the General Hospital, where he was well cared for. But Mr. Brydon had no desire to be hung—he knew that was inevitable,—and as soon as he recovered strength sufficiently to lift his waistcoat from the chair by his side, on which it had been laid, he took a little rough-looking paper ball out of the fob pocket and deliberately chewed it up and swallowed it. It was a preparation which Mr. Brydon had carefully made up many months ago, and its efficacy was fully proved now, for the nurse who attended him reported about two hours after that he was dead.

The Coroner, of course, held an inquest, and the medical testimony showed that Mr. Brydon had died from poison; the intelligent jury, after much deliberation brought in a verdict of suicide, and Mr. Brydon’s career was closed.

Jessie was taken home insensible and lingered for a couple of days, and then she quietly and peacefully passed away to join the one she loved. The long strain on her nervous system, consequent on Arthur’s arrest, and the sudden shock of his death, brought on premature child-birth, and she was too weak to survive its pangs. She remained unconscious, and knew not of the advent of a little girl, who only opened her eyes on this world to close them again for ever; and in three days after Arthur’s murder his body and his wife’s and child’s were laid side by side in the cold earth.

There is little more left to tell. Of course Frank married Mr. Benson, and they are living happily together. There are several little Franks, and their maternal parent takes good care of them

as far as medical matters are concerned, and her first son, whom she called Arthur, after her brother-in-law, bids fair to become a travelling drug store; but he bears up bravely under it, and will no doubt become some day a fine man. Miss Frank and her husband are happy, and live tranquilly and pleasantly together, but there will sometimes come over them a feeling of sadness, and a spirit of gloom when they think of the two who were so suddenly snatched away from them, and how much brighter and happier they might have been if Arthur had possessed sufficient moral courage to grapple with his trouble like a man, and not give himself over to the demon of drink as he did, from which moment his course was downwards to destruction.

THE END.



# A TERRIBLE CHRISTMAS.



# A TERRIBLE CHRISTMAS.

A STORY IN TWO PARTS; BY TWO PERSONS.

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## PART THE FIRST.

### THE MADMAN'S STORY.

WHEN was it? Was it last Christmas, or next Christmas, or was it ages and ages ago?

I can't remember. I can't remember anything since that night. I can't even be sure, sometimes, that I really remember all that took place then, or that all I remember ever did take place.

Let me see, where was it? Was it in Montreal?

I can't remember. Sometimes I think it was, and sometimes I think it was far, far away in some country I have forgotten now. I know it was in a large city. I remember the great tall houses, and the wide streets, and the constant buzz buzz of trade, and the whirl and swirl of fast and fashionable life. I remember the gay equipages, the prancing steeds, the handsome women, the foolish, foppish men—Ah! one of the women was so beautiful; and one of the men was so foolish.

I remember the churches too; with great tall spires stretching up, up until they were lost in the clouds. I remember climbing one of the spires until I had reached the clouds and rolled over and over in them, and danced in them, and swung to and fro in their fleecy folds as in a hammock.

Oh, it was fine fun! To be tossed up and down; to be danced back and forth; to hang on the gossamer thread of a thought, far above struggling humanity, and laugh at man's puny efforts to peer into illimitable space, and lay down the path for the planets to follow in their orbits, while the faintest trace of a cloud could mar his vision and set all his calculations at variance. And I could roll in the clouds, and laugh at men—aye, and women too; and above all at that one woman who was so beautiful, and that one man who was so foolish.

Fool ! The clouds got into my brain. I can feel them now, still rolling over and over, still dancing back and forth ; now banking up dark and lowering ; now breaking out bright and glorious sun-capped mountains of golden vapor as the orb of day shoots his slender rays over them, tinging and fringing them with gold.

Clouds, clouds, clouds. Always clouds now. Sometimes damp and heavy, and wet with the vast amount of aqueous matter suspended in them ; sometimes hot and dry and parched, as the fiery sun eats them up and leaves only a thin transparent film, which I only can see, to tell where they have been.

Was it all a cloud ? Did it all happen up in that steeple ? Did it ever happen at all ?

I do not know. Sometimes I think it did ; and then again it seems as if it had got mixed up with something else and I cannot remember.

It commenced by the sea. It was a gorgeously bright and clear day. The ocean lay lazily stretching itself out, out, out until the clouds came down and joined it and you could not tell where the ocean ended and the clouds began. The sun shone brilliantly, changing the little ripples of the water into shining scales, until it appeared as if the water had been converted into a million suits of burnished scale armor, and the sunbeams were dancing dizzy, whirling, maddening waltzes on it. The waves rolled slowly upon the long white beach, chasing the gleaming pebbles, rolling them over and over, in mere wantonness, and then leaving them stranded, high and dry, and lazily drawing themselves back to the depths of ocean. Isn't that like life ? Does not strength always thus play with weakness ; and, when its momentary pleasure has grown satiated, draw away and leave weakness to regret its own folly in being so easily beguiled ?

I cannot tell. The clouds have come again and I am rolling in them. Jolly clouds. There is fun in you ; but even you are treacherous, and open suddenly and drop me from your dizzy heights of airy thought to the dullness of earth. Away, I want no more clouds ! Let me think.

Ah ! I remember again, I remember that the wind whispered softly to the waves—I heard it, although it thought no one was listening ; and it kissed and caressed them, and they tossed themselves up in laughing little flakes and kissed back again, as the soft zephyr breathed gently over the face of the water. Here and there brilliantly gleaming fishes darted through the calm and

shining water, and a boy on a neighboring jetty, armed with a rod and line, threw his seductive bait to them in vain. They were too happy in that glorious sea to be seduced by the false sham of a wriggling worm only half concealing a cruel hook. Are men as wise as fishes? Do they seize at the apparent worm without regarding the concealed barb which will stick into them and poison their lives? I cannot remember. The clouds have come again.

Yet she laughed—she! Ah, now the clouds have rolled away and I can remember again.

She was with me. We stood by the seashore together, on a high rock, and gazed at the beauties of the sea, the sky, the earth; but naught was so beautiful in sea, in sky, on earth, as she. In all the wondrous beauty of her budding womanhood she stood by me and we gazed into each other's eyes; and while we drank in full draughts of nature's loveliness spread before us, our glances reflected back the deep, pure love which burned within us, and we felt that our hearts were made to throb in unison, our lives to be mingled together, even as the brooklet trickling out at our feet mingled with the ocean and rejoiced in the union.

I felt it, and thought that she felt it. I felt the warm passionate love surge through my veins and pour itself out in a torrent of words; I saw her start back to throw herself into my arms and seal our love with a kiss, and then—then—then—what then? I can't remember. The clouds have come again and I am swallowed up in them.

Was it then, or was it afterwards that he came? I cannot tell now. Was it that day by the seashore, or was it years afterwards in another country, and in a different scene that I saw him throw himself at her feet, and heard him utter words of love which she listened to with longing ears? I cannot remember; the clouds come into my brain and swallow all the recollection up.

But one thing I can remember. I can see that night plainly before me now. I can recall all its great agony, all its grand triumph. Ha! ha! it was rare sport to hear his bones crackle in the warm, leaping flame. It was joy to see him writhe and twist when he was seized in the arms of the fiery bride he little affected. I was delirious—stop—stop; not delirious; no, no; blot that out. I am sane, perfectly sane, you can see that, can't you? I am quite calm now. Listen, I will tell you how I revenged myself on him for his perfidy in stealing my love. How I paid

him back a life for a life. Oh, I am calm now. He stole my love and robbed me of my reason. I know, I know, you say I am mad; wait a minute; wait until the clouds get out of my brain, I will tell you how I took his life—aye, his life—to pay for my reason. But it could not pay for my love; no, no; a hundred lives like his could not have paid for the one love he robbed me of—but I killed him. Ah! ha! I killed him—killed him—killed him. Burnt him up, body and soul. I saw him burning. I lighted the fire. I watched him as his cheek grew pale; as his lip quivered; as his breath came short and his strong hands clutched helplessly at the cords with which I had bound him; I heard him shriek for help, and I laughed—laughed long and loud—and then, and then, the clouds came and I rolled in them, and shouted at man's folly and woman's love, and when I awoke again they told me I was mad. Mad! Well, perhaps, I am. I have loved; all who have loved have been mad.

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## PART SECOND.

### THE SANE MAN'S STORY.

My earliest ambition was to attain fame as a lawyer. I burned to achieve success at the bar; to force truth and "justice under the law" into the minds of the most unsympathetic and phlegmatic jury, and to rescue injured innocence from the attacks of wrong and injustice and show it pure and spotless before the world.

I know there is a popular prejudice against lawyers; that the word is often misconstrued "liars," and that the main component part of a lawyer's soul (if he has one, which some people will not admit) is generally believed to be "costs;" but I think that there are rather more law students who enter on the "practice of the law" with honest intentions than can be found in any other profession. How long these "honest intentions" last I am not prepared to say; but, in the majority of cases, I really believe that they last as long as life does.

I was brimful of "honest intentions" when I received my degree of B.C.L. from McGill College, Montreal, some ten years ago, and determined to enjoy a vacation, extending over the whole summer, before I settled down to the "practice of the law." Yet before that summer was over I had broken what was more than

an implied promise, and had greatly failed in my "honest intentions."

My story, up to this period, may be briefly told as follows: I am the orphan son of a farmer in a small township (which I do not care to particularize) near the border of the United States. Both my parents died while I was quite young, too young indeed to know anything of their love or care. I was left to the guardianship of a bachelor uncle, who lived "across the line," and who carefully nursed for me, during my minority, my small estate. Uncle Bill was and is—for I am glad to say he is still alive—as genial, whole-souled and kindly a man as I have ever met. He is a strict observer of the obligations of honor, and has never been known to break his word.

My boyish days with Uncle Bill passed very pleasantly, and, having never known the love of either father or mother, both seemed to be made up to me in him. So time slipped away until I was fifteen years of age when, having graduated at our village school, Uncle Bill decided that I should pass the next three years in the high school, Montreal, and then study for a degree in law at McGill. My first term at the high school passed about as pleasantly as such terms pass. I was not "the light of the school," neither was I the dullard, and I returned to Briardell, my uncle's home-stead, not much better or worse than I had left it. But Briardell had undergone a great change since I had left it, my aunt Bella (Mrs. Isabella Stewart, widow of George Washington Stewart, who had lately gone to some other world, whether better or worse no one knew) had taken up her residence for the summer with Uncle Bill, and brought with her her only daughter Ettie, a pink skinned, blonde-haired little fairy of twelve.

George Washington Stewart, whose status in "the unknown world" was rather apocryphal, had had a pretty well-defined position in this world; he had for many years enjoyed a position of trust and emolument under the benign sway of Uncle Sam's Treasury Department, and on his decease left some three hundred and odd thousand evidences, in the shape of dollars, that he had looked after his own interests well, if not after those of his country. Mrs. Stewart was, therefore, a "rich widow," and Ettie was, prospectively "a great heiress;" but I do not think either she or I was aware of the fact when we first met at Briardell, and grew rapidly into that intimacy which so easily springs up between cousins.

I like cousins, that is, I like cousins in the abstract, but I like one cousin in particular. Ettie and I soon became friends, then "great friends;" and, as the summer vacation drew to a close, we advanced to the stage of boy and girl love so common to youths of fifteen and maidens of twelve; and there I think we should have halted had it not been for Uncle Bill.

That worthy gentleman, Heaven bless him! had viewed the growing intimacy of his rich niece and his poor nephew with disfavor, and thought it incumbent on him, as our mutual guardian, to admonish me, as the sterner animal, on the subject; therefore, he called me into his private room the evening before my return to school—Mrs. Stewart and Ettie were to remain a few days longer—and addressed me somewhat as follows:

"Look-a-here, 'The-o-fullus,'" (my mother's father was named Theophilus and I was given his name) "yer must git eny fullish noshins abut Tetter out uv yer hed."

Ettie's proper name was Henriette; she preferred to be known only by the four last letters, and so did her mother and I; but Uncle Bill, and others, insisted upon it that Tetter was the proper abbreviation for Henriette, and so called her; just as many people persisted in calling me "Foley" as an abbreviation of Theophilus, and my uncle always addressed me as The-o-fullus. Uncle Bill paused a few seconds and then continued:

"Yeou an' Tetter hes been prutty entimet this summer, but yer aint nothin but gal an' boy, an' yer aint to git no foolish noshins in yer heds; so I warn yer Tetter es a great lady with hundreds uv thousands uv dollars comin' to her, an' yer aint got a red cent over seventy-five akers of ground thet aint worth the cost uv as much salt es wud enduce hef a dozen sheep to graze on it. So, Foley, don't yer get no foolish noshins in yer hed; yer got to git yer livin' an' mak' yer way in the world; an', meybee, yer may be President ef the States effore yer die—purvided yer live long enuf; but Tetter hes a diferunt kereeर befur her an' yer two aint ment to hitch hosses. So jest yer look sharp an' mind what I tell yer." After which speech he walked off, quite satisfied with his explanation, and I went to bed thinking, for the first time, that I was in love with Ettie.

Next morning I was to return to school in Montreal, and before I left my uncle spoke to me again.

"The-o-fullus," said he, "hev yer thought uv what I said to yer last nite?"

"Yes, uncle, I have," said I; "and I promise you that I will follow your advice with regard to Ettie, as far as possible; and I will never marry for money, but work honestly for my own living."

"Thet's rite," said he, "stick to thet."

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Six years had slipped away since that day when I graduated at McGill, and determined on a six months' trip through the States and West India islands before settling down in Montreal. My uncle had husbanded my seventy-five acres, which he said were not "worth the cost of as much salt as would induce half a dozen sheep to graze on it" so well that, not only had my college expenses been paid, but I had a sufficient surplus to warrant my proposed trip before commencing work. During these six years I had not met Ettie again, although I had often heard of her, and we had occasionally corresponded. Lately her letters had ceased, and for two years past I had not heard from her, and did not even know what part of the States she was living in. So runs my story up to the 15th of June, 1866, when I left Montreal for my six months trip.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the incidents of my visits to the various large cities of the Union, suffice it to say that I gradually made my way South until I reached New Orleans, from whence I crossed to Havana, and there took the steamer for St Thomas and the Windward West India islands.

It was a charming afternoon in September when the steamer dropped anchor in Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes, and I was pulled ashore by four stalwart blacks, who captured me and my baggage, and placed both in a rather dirty boat, before I quite understood what was being done to me. Bridgetown, the capital of the island, is a veritable bee-hive of industry, and presents a pretty, animated picture from the bay; but it possesses little or no architectural beauties, and about the only imposing-looking building in the place is the fine old cathedral of St. Michael with its great massive square tower, in which is a good chime of bells and a rather uncertain clock as far as correct time is concerned. The strong point about the island is the garrison, where about a thousand or more English troops and a regiment of blacks are usually stationed. The barracks are very large, well-built and substantial, situated on a bluff at the head of the bay, and are considered the finest and

most healthy quarters for troops in the West Indies. The parade ground is large, very level, and well shaded, and it is usual for the troops to be "put under canvas" for a few weeks during the months of August and September, the "hot season" out there. This was the case when I arrived; and, as it chanced to be Thursday, I soon found out that the "correct thing" to do was to go up to the parade ground—about a mile from the town—to hear the band practice, which it did every Thursday afternoon. This is the fashionable assemblage of the island; there all the notables congregate, and there the girls delight to go and have half an-hour's chat or flirtation with the officers of the garrison, for the Barbadoes girls, like girls the world over, are fond of the red coats of the British Army. Beyond the garrison is the little village of Hastings, a favorite bathing place, and "the rocks" at Hastings are a great resort for those who love to inhale the salt sea breeze, or to enjoy a sentimental stroll along the sands. I had been furnished with letters of introduction by some friends in New York, and one of my newly formed acquaintances, a young man named Henry Bergen, a clerk in a large commission house, accompanied me to the parade ground, and proposed that we should extend our drive to Hastings rocks, which of course I did. I had noticed that Bergen frequently looked anxiously around while we were on the parade ground, as if searching for some one he could not find; but on reaching the rocks his face lighted up with pleasure as he noticed a handsome landau, drawn by a fine pair of piebald horses, come towards us down the Worthing road and stop at the rocks. Four ladies were seated in the carriage, two of middle age, two just blooming into womanhood.

I have never seen any one who so thoroughly filled my idea of perfect beauty as one of the young ladies who sat on the front seat of the carriage. I shall not attempt to describe her for two reasons; first, I could not do thorough justice to her, and, secondly, men's ideas of beauty differ so much that, possibly, what I consider exquisitely lovely, you may think ordinary or even plain looking; suffice it to say that the face so attracted me that I involuntarily asked my companion who she was.

"Miss Stewart," he answered with a blush which showed me there was no doubt what his opinion on the subject of her beauty was. "She is a young lady from the States who, with her mother, is paying a visit to the Jones' while they get some law business settled. Isn't she pretty?"

I looked at the elder ladies and instantly recognized my aunt, who had changed very little in the six years which had elapsed since I had last seen her, but Ettie had "grown out of all knowledge," as the saying is, and I should never have recognized her again as the golden-haired little beauty with whom I had been so desperately in love six years before at Briardell.

Bergen, who was acquainted with all the ladies, proposed that we should alight and speak to them, which we did, he kindly introducing me, as I did not tell him I was a relative of the Stewarts. My aunt did not recognize me, and the name, "Mr. Langdon, a gentleman from America," did not seem to help her recollection at all; but Ettie knew me almost instantly, and holding out both hands in her old, impulsive way cried out,

"Why, it's The!" Somehow no one ever gives me my whole name, I always get it in fragments; sometimes a piece of the beginning, sometimes a part of the end, usually a nickname.

"You dear old stupid," she continued, getting out of the carriage and slipping her arm through mine in the old familiar manner, "who would ever have thought of seeing you in this out-of-the-way place; and what a fright you look with those great whiskers and beard. You'll just shave all the hair off your face to-morrow, except your moustache, or I'll never speak to you again."

We walked away from the carriage, and in a few moments were back on the friendly footing of childhood, laughing and talking over old memories and telling each other something of our lives during the past six years. Bergen remained by the carriage moodily, and I noticed his eyes flash as Ettie and I walked away; I paid no attention to it at the time, but I remembered it afterwards.

Ettie told me how it was I had met her mother and herself in Barbadoes. It appears that amongst the other property George Washington Stewart had left, was a claim to a portion of a sugar plantation in Barbadoes; and as the agent in charge had not been working it satisfactorily of late years, Mrs. Stewart had determined to visit her possession and endeavor to sell the estate. This had taken longer than was expected, as Stewart's partner in the plantation had lately died and the property could not be sold until his son came of age, which would be about Christmas, and Mrs. Stewart had determined to wait until the sale was completed, a purchaser having been found. The heir whose majority they were awaiting was Mr. Henry Bergen, a very devoted admirer of

Ettie's, who seemed to think it would be a far better arrangement than selling the estate if a new partner was admitted in the person of Miss Ettie. What the young lady thought on the subject it was difficult to say; when I laughingly tried to joke her about Bergen's very evident admiration, her cheeks flushed, and her eyes glanced half angrily at me as she said,

"Don't talk nonsense, The; Mr. Bergin and I are very good friends, that is all. You men are all so stupid; if a girl says a civil word to you, you immediately think she is in love with you. What has Mr. Bergen been saying to you?"

"Nothing. I have seen very little of him the past few days"—this conversation took place a few weeks after my arrival—"and then he has scarcely spoken to me. He seems out of sorts."

"The," she said very earnestly, "promise me you will not make an enemy of Harry Bergen. You don't know what he may do to you."

"I have no desire to make him an enemy," I replied lightly; "and I have no fear of anything he can do to me."

"But promise me," she insisted. "I do not want that man to be your enemy."

"I will promise anything to please you," I said, trying to be impressive; but, although she blushed slightly, she pretended not to notice the intonation of my voice, and continued,

"Try to avoid him, The. I know he does not like you, and you must remember that there is insanity in the family."

"Is there?" I answered carelessly; "I was not aware of the fact. Now you mention it, I remember having noticed several times that he has a strange, wild expression at times. So he is mad?"

"No. I did not say that; but his father died in the lunatic asylum here, and he has been "queer" two or three times as a boy; but the doctors think he will get over it as he grows older, if he lives a quiet, steady life."

"Gets married and settles down, eh?" I said, trying to catch her eye; but she rose hastily, glanced out of the window and said,

"I must go and dress for dinner now. Shall I see you at the rocks this evening?"

I replied in the affirmative and left the house. In the avenue I met Bergen, and I spoke to him. He glared savagely at me and passed on towards the house without returning my salutation.

"Mad as a March hare," I soliloquized, as I went back to my hotel to dinner.

When I landed in Barbadoes I had intended to remain there only a day or two, and as soon as I had visited "Hackleton's Cliff," "the Animal Flower Cave" and "The Boiling Spring," (the three "sights" of the island) to have taken the first trading vessel for St. Vincent and continue my tour through the beautiful islands of the Caribbean sea; but that chance meeting with Ettie changed my purpose, and indeed changed my whole life, and I lingered on from day to day, from week to week, falling more and more in love every time I saw my cousin. My "honest intention" on being admitted to "the practice of the law" was to earn a competency before I thought of marriage, and that I would never so demean myself as to owe fortune to my wife, but that resolve was gone, and I found myself hanging on every word Ettie uttered, and constantly trying to decide whether she really returned my love or whether she had only that cousinly feeling for me which sometimes comes so near to being love and yet is not. While at dinner I resolved, for the hundredth time, to "know my fate" that evening, and with that resolve went to keep my appointment with Ettie at the rocks.

It was "band" evening and the rocks were crowded. I saw the Jones' carriage with Mrs. Stewart in it, but Ettie was not there, she had doubtless alighted for a stroll along the beach as usual, and, after saluting my aunt, I turned to seek her. As I turned I saw her. She was standing on the highest point of the rock, leaning against a wall which bounded a private residence, and by her side was Henry Bergen. He was speaking rapidly and gesticulating violently, and she appeared terrified, and anxious to break from him. Suddenly he threw himself on his knees and his words poured forth in an almost unbroken torrent as he declared his love and pleaded his suit with her. By this time I was quite close, and as Ettie turned to leave him she saw me and sprang towards me. Bergen jumped to his feet and faced me. Never can I forget that wild, despairing look, nor the gleam of madness starting from his strained and glaring eyes.

"Ah," he shouted rather than spoke, "it is you. She leaves me to go to you; but it shall not be. You shall not have her, she is mine, mine, mine! We are going to be married beneath the sea," and with a wild laugh he sprung on Ettie, seized her in his arms and leaped off the rocks into the water below.

The movement was so quick that although I was within a yard of him I could not arrest him before he took the desperate leap, and Ettie's terrified scream of horror rang out on the calm air, startling the idle loungers into a knowledge of the tragedy attempted to be enacted before them.

In an instant I had plunged after them and seized the maniac. The rocks at this point are over twenty feet high, and the waves break under them into a cavern formed by the constant surging of the waters; fortunately, however, the tide was out and the water was not over two feet deep. Bergen turned as I touched him, and loosing his hold of Ettie allowed her to drop into the water while he turned on me. I am naturally powerful, and my athletic training at McGill had greatly developed my muscles; but I was no match for the raving lunatic who rushed on me like a demon and strove to throw me into the water. I struck him a heavy blow in the face, but he did not heed it, and in another second he had closed with me, and what I knew was a struggle for my life had commenced. Strong as I am I felt like a child in his grasp, and in less time than it takes to write it he had forced my feet from under me and we both fell into the water, he above me holding me down and endeavoring to keep my head under water. The struggle was brief but fierce, and I felt my strength failing me, when help arrived, in the shape of some gentlemen who had run down the rock to the beach and hastened to my assistance. Even with this assistance it was a difficult task to secure the madman and take him to the shore, which Ettie had already reached, and where I was speedily assisted, for I was too much exhausted to stand alone.

That night I told Ettie of my love and learned that I was loved in return. Mrs. Stewart, with whom I was a great favorite, willingly gave her consent. Indeed I think she was secretly very much obliged to me, for she was greatly afraid of Ettie's falling in love with one of the "red coats" and being separated from her.

My aunt's consent to my union with Ettie was, however, conditional. She approved of the marriage, but required that I should return at once to Montreal, commence practice, and the wedding should take place a year from the next Christmas. Of course I consented—I would have consented to any terms—and left Barbadoes about the middle of November, Mrs. Stewart promising to be in Canada early in the ensuing year. Harry Bergen was then in the lunatic asylum, apparently a confirmed lunatic.

I returned to Montreal, and at once secured an office on that portion of St. James street then known as "Little" St. James street, and entered on "the practice of the law." Everything went well with me. I got a large amount of business, for a young lawyer, and, before my first year had expired, I had gained some celebrity by winning two or three rather difficult cases. My aunt came on in the spring and, partly to please Ettie, bought a house in Montreal and decided to settle there.

So matters stood with me on the day before Christmas, and an eventful day it seemed to me, and so it proved to be, although not in the way I had expected, for I was to be married on Christmas day.

I spent Christmas Eve at my aunt's house and did not leave until nearly eleven o'clock, when I went to my room over my office in Little St James street, which I was to occupy for the last time that night.

My office was one of five on the second flat of an old-fashioned brick building; and the third flat was divided into four rooms, with a bath room and a large roomy vault for storing books, papers, etc. The place was very convenient and suitable for bachelors, and the four rooms were occupied by young men, like myself, who were just starting in the world and had not yet made a name, or a home.

The vault was one of the "institutions" to use an Americanism —of the house. Why it had ever been built on the third flat nobody knew, yet there it was; what use it could be put to no one could tell, until one day I invited a reporter to visit me; and, in showing him the conveniences of the place, he noticed the vault and said, "What a splendid place that is for you fellows to keep your beer. It is cool, all lined with iron, with an iron door—and has a gas jet in it, so that you can always get a light. By jove, it is a handy place for beer!" and he looked about wistfully as if he wondered that no one had ever before thought of what a useful purpose the vault could be put to, and, therefore, stocked it with "Bass" or "Dawes," or some other brand congenial to his palate. That hint of the reporter's "took;" and from that time the vault was used as a receptacle for beer, the door being left unlocked so that the four of us living on the flat could have free access at any time.

When I reached my room that Christmas Eve after parting from Ettie, I found all the rooms on the "living" flat—as we used

to call it—unoccupied. My fellow-lodgers had, evidently, not finished their Christmas Eve yet.

I lighted the gas, lit a pipe; and, having donned my slippers and dressing-gown, sat before the fire and took a look into the future. I thought of what a great change to-morrow would make in my life; how different it would be to have some one waiting for me at the door when I came home, not the scarred, blistered, and “unpainted for twenty years” door which now admitted me to my “home” (?) ; but to a real home, with a real wife and real additions in the prospective future.

It was a jolly train of thought, and I do not know which gave out first, the pipe or the “additions in the prospective future;” but the last thing I can remember distinctly was that my eldest son was appointed Governor General of Canada, and that, following the example of Mr. U. S. Grant, President of the United States, he had appointed me postmaster for Montreal. I was just completing a scheme for building a new post office when I lost consciousness; and how long I slept I do not know.

My awakening was a rude one.

The first sensation I experienced, that I can remember, was one of suffocation. I struggled, and wrestled, like one in a nightmare; and finally, by a great effort, awoke.

Awoke to what? To find myself gagged and bound hand and foot to the chair I had been sitting in when I dropped to sleep; and standing between me and the fire was a form which at first I took to be only a remnant of my nightmare, but which I soon found to be a stern reality.

It was the form of Henry Bergen.

He was watching me with a fixed, steady gaze, as if noting every breath I drew; and as I opened my eyes and became conscious he changed his position, and seemed relieved to find that I was awake.

“ You are surprised to see me,” he said quite calmly, although the light of madness smouldered in his eyes. “ You did not expect me? Ha! ha! never mind. You might have invited an old friend to your wedding, but you didn’t and I have invited myself. It will be a jolly wedding; oh, such fun! A bride waiting for a bridegroom who will never come—never, never come. I have escaped from the prison you threw me into; I have crossed the seas; I have followed you like a sleuth hound until I have tracked you down. Oh, it is rare fun. You thought to have her; you thought

you could outwit me—no, no ; I am too clever for you, and tomorrow, while your bones are lying charred and blackened amongst the ruins of this house, I will console your bride for you—your bride ? She shall be my bride. As for you I have prepared a bride for you, death ; come and see how pleasant I will make it for you."

He lifted the chair in which I was bound and carried me with ease out of the room into the vault and deposited the chair in the centre of it. The gas was lighted, and I noticed that a bottle with a candle stuck in its mouth had been placed in one corner. There was nothing else in the vault except a few bottles of beer.

Bergen looked at me for a few moments and laughed ; then he lit the candle which was in the bottle and placed it near my feet ; he then crossed to the gas burner and turned the light out, still keeping his hand on it, however. He then laughed again and said :

" I've turned the gas off, but I am going to turn it on again, only this time *I shall not light it.*" He turned on the gas and then continued ; " I shall lock the vault door and leave you with the escaping gas and the burning light ; when the vault is filled with gas there will be an explosion and you will be blown to atoms. Ha ! ha ! it's funny, isn't it ! It needed a madman to think out such a fine revenge. You stole my love. I'll steal your life. Good night."

He stepped out of the vault, and I heard the door closed and locked.

My situation was truly terrible, and there seemed to be no possible escape from a horrible death. I was most securely bound to the chair, my hands being strapped behind its back and my feet firmly fastened to the lower rung in front, while two stout cords around my body held me securely to the back of the chair. I was gagged ; but so gagged that I could breathe, although I could not cry out. To release myself was impossible, and there appeared to be no means of attracting attention to my condition, even had there been any one on the flat, which I knew there was not, as the three friends who occupied rooms there had gone into the country to spend Christmas, and would not be back for two days. The janitor lived in the basement, and there was no one else in the building.

I fully realized my position, and knew that my death was almost inevitable ; but I did not quite despair. The gas burner, which was now open and fast filling the vault with noxious vapor,

was very near the floor ; and, if I could get to it, I might be able to reach up to it and turn it off with my teeth. Although I was only five or six feet from the side of the vault where the gas burner was, it took me a long time to jerk and twist my chair over to it, and the vault was now so filled with gas, that every moment I expected the fatal explosion to take place. At last I reached the burner and by a great effort stretched my neck up so that one end of the wooden gag which was in my mouth rested against the screw and in a few seconds more I had pushed it round and shut off the stream of poisonous vapor.

I was saved for the present; but was so exhausted and over-powered by the gas that I fell to the ground insensible, bringing the chair down with me.

When I recovered consciousness I found that almost all the gas had escaped out of the vault, and the air was comparatively pure, but intensely cold, and my limbs were so benumbed I could not move. Some hours must have elapsed, as the candle had burned almost out, and I supposed it must be nearly morning; but would morning bring relief? I scarcely hoped so. I should not be missed until near mid-day; and when I was missed, who would think of searching for me in the old vault? It was with a bitter pang that I resigned myself to the idea that I was doomed to pass many hours, perhaps days, in that gloomy vault unable to make myself heard. I was to have been married at eleven o'clock; but all chance of that was over now, for even should I be released in time, I was in too weak and exhausted a condition to do more than be put to bed.

Wearily the minutes dragged themselves away, and the candle went out, leaving me in darkness. Then a new fear came to me: suppose Bergen should return to see if his work was completed? There would be no hope for me then. The idea grew, and grew until my brain reeled and I again became unconscious.

When I awoke to reason again I found myself in bed in my own room with a doctor and some friends attending me.

I owed my deliverance to my reporting friend's weakness for beer. He had awoke very thirsty about ten o'clock on Christmas morning, and having no beer in his boarding house, had come to my rooms where he knew there was a supply, and so found me. There was no wedding that day, and it was several weeks before my system recovered from the severe shock it had received; then

Ettie and I were married and spent our honeymoon where we had learned to love each other, in Barbadoes.

How Bergen found me out I do not know. He had been discharged from the asylum in Barbadoes some months after I left the island, and started on a pleasure trip to Europe; very little more was heard of him until he appeared in my room on that memorable Christmas Eve. He must have been in Montreal some days watching me; but I never discovered where he had been staying. After locking me in the vault he went to the St. Lawrence Hall and spoke and acted so strangely that a policeman was called who took him to the station house "for safe keeping," and he was shortly after sent down to Beauport, where he now is a confirmed lunatic.

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